

THE THREE GROATS.



THE THREE GROATS.

TRANSLATED FROM THE ITALIAN

(*LI TRÈ GIULI*)

G. B. ^{OF} CASTI.

WITH A MEMOIR OF THE AUTHOR
AND
SOME ACCOUNT OF HIS OTHER WORKS.

A NEW EDITION.

WITH NUMISMATIC NOTES.

BY M. MONTAGU.

“A DUN,
“Horrible Monster! hated by Gods and Men,
“To my aërial citadel ascends.”

PHILIPS.

LONDON.

M.DCCC.XLI.

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1841

DEDICATION.

TO THE PUBLIC.

MY DEAR PUBLIC!

Albeit without permission, I dedicate my Book to you. It is a scurvy Book as to "volume," I know, and little worth acceptance: but you are, it is acknowledged on all hands, a "judicious Public," and will not estimate merit by dimensions: had I not been assured of this, I would have presented it to you in Quarto. You are moreover a "reading Public;" and will therefor look into a Work that is dedicated to you, which an individual might not think it incumbent on him to do: an additional reason for chusing you as my patron. Besides which I live in a garret: how therefor can I know any body in the nether world sufficiently well to laud the talents and virtues they

would naturally possess in that character? whereas, yours being already established, I have only to appeal to yourselves for an account of them, thus reciprocally sparing our blushes.

This is intended in all seriousness: but should it excite a smile, here on the threshold—as it were—of our acquaintance, I shall hail it as a favourable augury of improvement as we advance to the “*medias res*” of our subject; for it is altogether of a cachinnatory nature, and should be taken up *only with congenial feelings*.

But the THREE GROATS has a higher claim to your notice, however it is but a lean Octavo and a Translation to boot: it has a large view to the commercial embarrassments under which you at times unhappily suffer; and, without going into abstruse speculations on political economy, it enters practically in the matter of finance, with especial reference to the case of Debtor and Creditor (in which relation it is presumed you pretty generally stand one to another) recommending mutual charity and forbearance.

Should in fact, in these sordid matters, subtraction produce the usual remains of discontent on

the one hand, or—on the other—an indiscreet importunity occasion dissatisfaction, nothing is so likely to restore good humour—if not good understanding—between the parties as a perusal of the THREE GROATS, which indeed may be considered a never-failing Bank to be drawn upon under such circumstances. Moreover with this in your pocket you can never be without money.

Then please to accept the same
from,

My dear PUBLIC !

Your ever devoted

And most obedient

Humble Servant.

* *

London. * * *au 5^{me}*:

April * * 1826.



P. S.

TO THE SECOND EDITION.

THE First Coinage of the THREE GROATS (alias *TRÈ GIULI*) having obtained so rapid a circulation as now, from wear and tear, to have almost entirely disappeared, it would surely be ungrateful in me not to anticipate the call of its liberal Consumers for a Second.

I have accordingly here put forth a New Impression of the same; and request you, Oh my dear Public! to continue your benevolent patronage and expenditure thereof, whereby you will in due time enable me to descend into more accessible regions among yourselves.

Meanwhile accept the assurances of my *high* consideration.

M. M.

1841.



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SKETCH
OF THE
LIFE AND WRITINGS
OF
G. B. CASTI.

THE Poet under our notice, tho of considerable celebrity on the Continent of Europe, is comparatively little known in this Country; which is to be

* * * It was my intention to preface this Version of the *TRÈ GIULI* with a biography of the Author and a review of his other works: but circumstances have induced me for the present to lay this plan aside: I had already made some progress in its execution, when I perceived that it would lead me to a much greater length than I had contemplated, and, instead of merely serving to usher in the present piece, would make it altogether of minor interest: moreover it would have compelled me to assume a tone of gravity not here well coupled with the gay, and to mingle severeness with what is desired should be altogether lively. Deferring therefore that weightier task to some other opportunity and more suitable place, we will here confine ourselves to just so brief a mention of our Poet as may suffice to put us in possession of the leading events of his life and productions of his Muse.

attributed chiefly to the nature of his principal works, that will probably for a long time keep them confined to a foreign language, or at least obstruct their general dissemination here should they ever be translated into our own.

This seems to imply a want of the merit that should entitle them to wear an English dress, which in fact—wherever the defect lie—is not to be denied: nevertheless it will only operate partially on their Author's fame, which is undoubtedly destined to encrease with its course adown the stream of time. It will be our object here to give it our feeble aid, where it may be done without any compromise of justice or propriety.

G. B. CASTI was born about 1720: but his birth-place is not ascertained; neither is there any account of his origin nor early years. From boyhood he was educated for the Church at the collegiate seminary of Montefiascone*, where he made so rapid a progress as to be chosen a Belles-

* Montefiascone is a small town in the Papal States between Sienna and Rome. It has hitherto been noted only for its wine, a species of Muscadel, which most of our tourists have tasted and approved: henceforth it will be celebrated as a fount of genuine Hippocrene.

Lettres Professor at the age of sixteen. He subsequently obtained a canonry in the same church, which was the utmost of his clerical preferment: but he later adopted the generic title of *Abbate*, by which he continued to be known thro after-life; tho, on settling at Paris towards its close, he dropped that designation and wished it to be forgotten.

CASTI did not exhibit any early attachment to the Muses: he was turned of forty before at least making public any poetical effusions: the piece, of which a translation is here given, was his first. He published the *TRE GIULI* in 1762, and with all the success that might have been expected from so sprightly and amusing a performance: it added considerably to the number of his friends, and gave him at once a name in the poetical literature of Italy. Induced, as it would seem, by a distaste for the clerical profession, and a desire to see foreign countries, in 1765 he quitted Montefiascone altogether, to seek his fortune in some other walk of life. He went to Florence, where he presently obtained the office of Court-Poet to the Grand Duke Leopold. Fortune seemed now to have taken him at once by the hand: the Emperor Joseph II. coming to Florence soon afterwards,

distinguished our Laureate by his favourable notice, and carried him to Vienna in his suite*. Here he soon grew into general favour ; and was particularly noticed by the celebrated Prince Kaunitz, whose son he accompanied on several diplomatic missions, tho not in any specific character ; which enabled him to see most of the Courts of Europe under very favourable circumstances, and gratified the desire for travel he had so long entertained. Meanwhile he cultivated his poetical talents, however not to the best advantage either for the World or his own reputation, for at this time he began his *Novelle* or Tales in Verse, which are of a character that entirely forbids their perusal to modest eyes. In 1778 he went to St. Petersburg, whether alone or not does not appear, but at all events he was very flatteringly received by the Empress, whose civilities did not subsequently meet with that return she perhaps expected. During his stay here he composed a satirical piece, to which he gave the name of *Poema Tartaro*. It is a poem of twelve

* In Kelly's Reminiscences, published some years ago, Casti is made to have become known to Joseph II. only at Vienna circa 1785 ; but this must be erroneous, as all the foreign accounts of his life coincide in referring that event to the date above given.

cantos, in *ottava rima*, descriptive of the court of Catharine II. and its manners, but which he only published some years afterwards on his return to Vienna. This work is of small merit; nevertheless it raised a terrible storm against him in the North, to avoid which, at the instance of Joseph II., he made a visit to Constantinople, by sea, of which voyage a short account written by himself was published in Italy a few years ago. The outcry having subsided, he went back to Vienna, where he continued under the protection of his imperial patron, who employed him occasionally on dramatic compositions* for the Court Opera, of which five have since been printed, all in the mock-heroic style. He remained there during the reign of his old master Leopold, who does not however seem to have distinguished him with any particular mark of favour.

On the accession of the late Emperor Francis II. CASTI obtained the Court-Laurel, which had been

* One of these, the subject of which was suggested to him by Joseph II., "*Il Re Teodoro in Venezia*," chiefly owing to the music of Paisello, had a great run on the Continent at the time of its production. Another, "*La Grotta di Trofonio*," was brought out under some alterations at Drury Lane in 1791. It was Casti who versified Beaumarchais's Figaro for the music of Mozart in 1786.

vacant since 1782 by the death of Metastasio. In 1796 he left Vienna altogether; and, after remaining during the succeeding year in Italy, in 1798 he removed to Paris, where he finally established his residence. He now wholly occupied himself about the work to which he chiefly owes his celebrity, namely—his *Animali Parlanti**: He had begun it before leaving Vienna; and in two years more he brought it to a conclusion†. After the publication of that poem he turned his mind again to his *Novelle*, and put forth a new edition of the eighteen he had written in Germany, as abovesaid:

* This is indeed a great performance, but unfortunately in some degree liable to censure for want of delicacy. It is called an Epic Poem, of twenty-four cantos in *sesta rima*, relating the civil revolutions that took place in the animal kingdom at some time anterior to the deluge not precisely determined. As may be supposed, it is a political satire, whose shafts are chiefly aimed at tyrants conquerors and cheats; in other respects it breathes nothing but peace and good-will towards men.

A very partial and loose version of it in English has been published by Mr. S. Rose. And an entire Translation by some other hand is said to exist in M. S.: but, except as a matter of curiosity, it will be no loss should this never see the light; for, happily, in our favoured Country, we do not need such assistance: yet it cannot fail of its influence elsewhere. The French have a very good Prose Translation by M. Paganel, and one in verse more free by L. Marechal.

† It came out in 1802.

to these he now added thirty more, in the same vicious style; but they were only posthumously printed. This work was his last: he died on the 16th of February 1803, when, tho at an advanced age, appearances seemed yet to promise him many years of life*.

Besides the pieces already mentioned, there has appeared since his death a volume of lyrical poems: but they are of comparatively small merit: passion, as exhibited in the softer affections, was not CASTI'S *fort*; his talent lay in ridicule and an agreeable irony, to which he brought great learning—sound judgment—and an inexhaustible invention and humour: it cannot be too much regretted that in lighter points his taste was not of a more severe nature.

* There are two engraved Portraits of CASTI: tho, so little like each other, that one would never imagine them to be intended for the same person: both done at Paris, in, as it would appear, the latter years of his life. The one, that most generally seen prefixed to his Works, drawn by Appiani, represents him in a night-cap. And the other, where his head is uncovered and he looks somewhat older, a highly-finished etching by his countryman and friend Rosaspina. The first is not an agreeable looking Portrait: But the latter on the contrary very much so, and with a great deal of apparent verisimilarity and identity about it; and—from this—likely to be the truer representation of him of the two, as it is in every respect much the more pleasing one: It is also much more scarce: Collectors will do well to procure it if they can.

We are now to speak of the Piece before us, which, it is hoped, may sufficiently tell its own story and apologize for itself: This vindication, however, only refers to the English Version; for, as to the Original, it may boldly invite attention and challenge any criticism.

The TRE GIULI is a succession of Sonnets, independent of one another—yet all forming one series, on the subject of a debt to the amount of that sum* unfortunately incurred by the Poet to a merciless Creditor: In these he exercises his fancy in all imaginable means†, either to refuse—pacify

* A *Giulio* (Julius) the same with the present *Paulo* of Italy, is worth about a Groat english. See Note to S. 164. The etymology and origin of this now immortal *species* well deserve to be here recorded.

“Julius II. struck a silver coin, that was called after his name; and, from its being very handsomely executed and of great convenience for circulation at Rome, the succeeding Popes continued to issue one similar, merely substituting as usual their own arms and name: yet, these coins continued to bear the names of Juliuses, as are still called those successively struck by Leo—Clement—and others.” Vincenzio Borghini. Dell’ origine della Citta di Firenze.

† Strepsiades himself was not more tormented by his Creditors than our poor Poet seems to have been, nor more ingenious in devising means to elude them. The old Athenian’s burning glass however (The Clouds. A. 2.) was a hint not unworthy to have been taken by our Debitor.

—flatter—entreat—put off—alarm—or evade his Dun; lamenting his misfortune and so on; which he does with wonderful ingenuity, without ever flagging or exhausting his matter, thro the two hundred of which it is composed*. In a *jeu-d'esprit* of so playful a nature, it is of little import whether the parties concerned be suppositious or not; yet it appears to have originated in fact, as the Poet relates in the preface to the first edition of the work, from a friend of his good-humouredly dunning him for some trifling balance paid to his

* The first edition of the TRÈ GIULI contained 216 Sonnets; republications of which have appeared at different times since, and are generally very incorrect: but the Author was subsequently induced to revise the whole, and retrench their number to the 200 here given. The Editor of that (*Napoli*. 1814.) from which this translation is made, asserts it to be printed from a corrected copy in the Author's own hand.

As, however, the Parisian Presses (from which the Continent generally is supplied with CASTI's Works, they being for the most part prohibited out of France) uniformly give the TRÈ GIULI in that shape; and, as such Copies may be in the hands of our Readers, the Sonnets are here numbered in a corresponding manner for reference.

We have also given in an Appendix the Additional Sonnets, whose general inferiority to the others will serve to confirm the statement already made of their having been purposely omitted by the Author: and, for a still more satisfactory corroboration, see Note 11. to Sonnets 94. and 95.

debit in a country excursion*. They who have read the *Trè Giuli* in Italian will perhaps not be unwilling to see how it looks in an English dress: And for those who understand the language, but are not acquainted with this curiosity of it, not to make them take our Translation on credit, it is doing them a real service to refer them to the Original†: in one word—it is delightful: nothing can be more lively—droll—and entertaining: To describe in detail what gives it this character would be to anticipate the reading itself, we will therefor not attempt any further analysis: but, unless the reader be fated with the most inflexible rigidity of muscle, it will be quite impossible for him to proceed at all without continual interruption from calls on his risitive emotions‡.

* In that most interesting of all biographies, the Life of the great sovereign Pope Sixtus V., there is an anecdote about Three Giuli, that may have occupied our author's mind.

† In the short-lived *Liberal* (Vol. 2. P. 207.) there is an excellent account of the TRÈ GIULI, written truly *con amore*. Here indeed it is—*Si sic omnia!*

‡ This account may be thought exaggerated; but at least it is not intentionally so. Judging from its effect on my own feelings, as well as from the estimation in which this little Work is universally held in Italy, I may have deceived myself as to its merit and attributed to it a degree of laughter-stirring

Why the feline race is thought to be the most unsusceptible of that exhilarating sensation I know not, but am quite sure that—in familiar phrase—the TRE GIULI would “make a Cat laugh.” Neither has the Poet altogether lost sight of what might ennoble the indulgence of this vulgar propensity; for, tho he does not aim at the “*miscuit utile dulci*,” as precept would here have been misplaced, he mingles very aptly and agreeably with his *badinage* allusions both classical* and scientific.

power that it will not be found to possess: Yet I would hope otherwise; for I cannot think that what has given a whole Nation undiminished entertainment for nearly a century can be deficient in genuine and self-existent sources of delight: and, as to myself, it has lost nothing of its mirth-moving qualities from the first day of our acquaintance, thro reiterated perusals for more years than one that this Version has been on the anvil to the present hour. Indeed I consider this attempt but as a *Debt*, which it would be downright dishonesty in me not to pay. If therefor it should fail of its effect in some particular instances, let me hope that may be attributed to an unfavourable moment—or to our more foggy climate—or to a prejudice against the hard-hearted Creditor of the sum in question, or—in short—to any thing but an inherent want of the necessary requisites in the Poem and—more especially—in the Translation.

* It has been thought better not to swell the Notes with an explanation of all these, as books of reference are always at hand, should his recollections fail the Reader.

As some of our Readers may not have a distinct idea of the SONNET, it will be well briefly to state that—The Poem so called is one arbitrary in its construction while absolute in its rules: It consists of fourteen lines; subdivided into two *Quatrains* or Stanzas of four lines, and two *Tiercets* or three-line Stanzas: the *Quatrains* are to have but two similar rhymes, alternate or successive, but so placed as neither to begin nor end with a couplet: the *Tiercets* may have two or three rhymes, at pleasure, arranged in any way save with a closing couplet. We are well aware of the schism that exists on this latter point, particularly among some “fair” Practitioners, and that we may herein be thought “too peremptory.” But the Muse can make no compromise with vice, however beautiful the sinner. A mere *Quatorzaine*—a Fourteener—indeed is a “chartered libertine.” But the Sonnet stands upon higher ground, from which it is not permitted to descend: *vulgo*—it has a character to lose, and therefor *must never end with a rhyme*. Time was that we ourselves were heterodox in the matter, as may be seen in the first coinage of these monies: but conviction has now reached us—tho late, and we err no more. Of course we only speak here of the mechanism—the form—the mere body

of the Poem ; on its soul—its what-about—we will not for the present touch. These are the established laws of the Sonnet (unalterable as those that governed the Medes and Persians) on which we will not here indulge in any commentary, content to exemplify them with our obedience, having strictly adhered to the prescribed form under the above modifications.

It has been confidently said, and accordingly repeated by such as avoid the labour of thinking for themselves, that the genius of our language is incompatible with the Sonnet : but, to give a short word to this question, We venture to think that such a decision has been come to only by those who have examined it superficially or failed in producing evidence to the contrary: That this form of verse presents great difficulties—is undeniable ; but it is not less true that they may be surmounted ; and, as there are not wanting instances wherein these have been successfully overcome, it seems more just to impute the frequent failures rather to want of skill or industry than to any radical inaptitude of our poetical idiom. Of this perhaps more anon. In the mean time we hope to have here furnished the Amateurs of this charming little Poem (we trust no unnumerous class) with one or two not unacceptable specimens.

It only remains to speak of our Translation, for which we merely lay claim to the merit of fidelity, conceiving that to be the chief praise of any such performance, and having spared no study to express our Author's thoughts in english words as closely as the respective idioms would admit: Yet, in exception to this general view, we hope not to be condemned for having in two or three instances* (all that seemed to require it) ventured to qualify his ideas, where allusions occurred that might be deemed irreverent, herein following St. Jerome's excellent precept†. This endeavour at closeness may serve as an excuse for the colloquial familiarity of our versification, at which the Reader might otherwise feel inclined to except. There is, however, one great source of drollery in the Original, that is absolutely untranslatable in this or any other language, namely—its being written throughout in *versi tronchi*‡, or truncated verse [were not

* Sonnets 68. 124. 125. 163. and 204.

† "Quod malum est—muta: quod bonum est—prode."
Epist: ad Ruff:

‡ These are also sometimes called *zoppi* or lame, from their appearing to halt on their march. Sonnets written in this rhyme are called *Sonetti muti*: they are seldom used but on burlesque or humorous subjects.

the term somewhat homely—*nicked* would express it perhaps with still more precision] that is—every line ending with a word accented on the last syllable, which has an effect indescribably ludicrous in Italian (where such are wholly excluded from legitimate poetry) particularly so when the sense corresponds to the comical effect they produce on the ear: it is a sort of mock-heroic in sound, or doggrel where burlesque exists independently of the sense. The only sound that might be supposed to cause a similar sensation in English verse is our “double rhyme*” (by the way—a very loose term for what it signifies) but this only approaches it very remotely, and that merely on account of its infrequency: the *versi tronchi* seem, while they entertain the ear with a novel and odd sound, to surprise the mind by giving an entire sense, while—from the abruptness of the termination—it appears to have left it incomplete: on the contrary, our “double rhyme” rather prolongs the sound

* This is in fact the *verso piano* or regular rhyme of the Italians, that in heroic verse is *endecasyllabic*, the final syllable of which being cut off makes the *tronco*.

after the sense has been received*. This little exposition will, we hope, soften the Reader's disappointment, should he find our Version even much below what our account of the Original may have led him to expect. Moreover, what but must suffer from travestiture in another tongue? To repeat an elegant comparison—it is like pouring off a perfume from one vessel into another, where, if ever so carefully done, its fragrance will in part evaporate in the transfusion. But let us hope our THREE GROATS will prove an essential oil—an *Eau de mille fleurs*—that may allow a few odours to

* That the merely english Reader may understand this more clearly, and be able to judge for himself, we here subjoin an italian Sonnet in the regularly formed rhyme, for contrast with the first Sonnet of our Original. The Translation is to boot.

In our selection of this Piece Petrarch himself—and therefore all paler stars—have been set aside; not only because it is the production of a “fair” hand, but on account of its real intrinsic excellence. It was written by Faustina Maria, the beautiful and accomplished daughter of Carlo Maratti the painter, and wife of the poet G: B: F: Zappi; and addressed to a lady who had once been loved by her husband. Surely nothing can exceed it in tenderness and delicacy of sentiment: it seems impossible to succeed better in touching on so difficult a point. What rival *could* hate for a triumph so generously and beautifully expressed? We only regret to have thus inadequately rendered so charming a composition.

FAUSTINA MARIA ZAPPI.

SONETTO.

Donna! che tanto al mio bel Sol piacesti,
Ch'ancor de' pregi tuoi parla sovente,
Lodando ora il bel crine—ora il ridente
Tuo labbro—ed ora i saggi detti onesti :

Dimmi,—quando le luci a lui volgesti,
Tacque egli mai—qual uom che nulla sente ?
O le turbate luci alteramente
(Come a me volge) a te volger vedesti ?

De' tuoi bei lumi alle due chiare faci
Io so ch'egli arse un tempo, e so ch'allora.....
Ma tu declini al suol gli occhi vivaci :

Veggio il rossor che le tue guancie infiora :
Parla : rispondi : ah ! non risponder ? taci—
Taci, se mi vuoi dir ch'ei t'ama ancora !

LI TRÈ GIULI.

SONETTO I.

Altri canti il valore, e la pietà,
E le guerre, ch' Enea nel Lazio fè ;
Onde sorse l'impero, e la Città,
Che leggi poscia all' Universo diè :

Le grazie altri d'un volto, e la beltà ;
Altri l'imprese de' superbi Rè :
Quei che la Musa mia destando va
Non è l'orrido Marte—Amor non è.

Del mio canto il soggetto eccolo qui—
Crisofilo Trè Giuli mi prestò,
E me li chiede cento volte il di :

Ei mi li chiede, ed io non glie li do :
E l'importuno Creditor così
In varie guise descrivendo vo.

FAUSTINA MARIA ZAPPI.

TO A LADY

FORMERLY LOVED BY HER HUSBAND.

SONNET.

Lady ! who once so charm'd my bosom's lord,
That of your merits yet he often tells,
And on your beauteous tresses' praise now dwells—
Now laughing lips—now talk with wisdom stor'd :

Say—when your look his answering look implor'd,
Was he e'er mute as one who coldly feels ?
Or mark'd you the ardent gaze that all reveals
(As now on me) on you intensely pour'd ?

Time was (I know it) by the radiance when
Of your bright eyes he burn'd ; and know that then.....
But—ah ! I see the glow that dyes your cheek :

You downwards cast those beaming eyes that kill :
Speak : answer : ah ! not answer ? Nay, ne'er speak :
Hush—hush—if you would say he loves you still !

THE BEE.

M: S: Translations.

evanesce, with abundance still remaining agreeably to stimulate the sense, and—above all—to promote the great moral end here in view—of holding up to merited odium the obnoxious persons who consider themselves warranted in requiring reimbursement of advances from those oppressed subjects whose want of “effects” may well justify the irritability imputed to the *Genus Vatum*. On mere *practical* persons it may inculcate a still more useful maxim—“Out of debt out of danger.”

* * There can be little doubt, by the way, that the late issue of GROATS from the Mint has been mainly owing to the notice drawn upon that coin by the First Publication of this Work. It is gratifying to see Public Opinion thus exerting a wholesome influence on the measures of Government, especially in money matters. *Vox Populi etc.*

BURTHEN OF THE SONNETS.

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1. The Poet opens his subject.	1 ... 43
2. Compelled to sing his debt, he compares himself to Homer.	2 ... 44
3. Invokes his Muse, rejecting fiction and fable.	3 ... 45
4. Song elicited from him by his Dun thro collision.	4 ... 46
5. Change in his poetic themes : appeals to Horace.	5 ... 47
6. Hopes favour from novelty, if nothing else.	6 ... 48
7. Says the whole world cannot match his Dun.	144 ... 49
8. Compares his Dun and himself to musical instruments.	145 ... 50
9. In distress, he deprecates all charity from his Dun.	147 ... 51
10. Declares he'll make his Dun hang himself.	148 ... 52
11. Complains of being perpetually haunted by him.	149 ... 53
12. Continues his complaint, requesting his Dun to leave him.	150 ... 54
13. Thinks his Dun would pursue him even to the moon.	151 ... 55
14. Determines to expatriate himself, tho sure of being tracked and followed every where by him.	152 ... 56
15. Supposes his Dun is drawn to him by attraction.	146 ... 57
16. Wishes to be relieved of his torments, like Orestes.	153 ... 58
17. Quits the town—but is compelled by his Dun to return.	154 ... 59
18. The Tiber desires him to sing about his Dun.	155 ... 60
19. His Dun goes on a journey, which greatly rejoices him.	156 ... 61
20. Prays for fine weather, to let his Dun get a good way off—then that storms and hurricanes may come down upon him.	157 ... 62

Sonnet	Paris Edit:	Page
21. Wishes his Dun may be taken by the Turks. . . .	158 ...	63
22. Compares himself to a besieged town. . . .	159 ...	64
23. Receives a dunning letter from his Creditor. . . .	160 ...	65
24. Says his Creditor's letter is arsenic to him. . . .	161 ...	66
25. Likens himself to a truant schoolboy. . . .	162 ...	67
26. Compares his circumstances to those of Priam. . . .	164 ...	68
27. Cautions persons against such a Creditor as his. . . .	7 ...	69
28. The Muse is excited to sing by his Dun's importunities. . . .	8 ...	70
29. Being wont formerly to boast of his stoicalness, says that his debt has now quite changed his character. . . .	9 ...	71
30. Complains—not of his debt—but his Dun. . . .	12 ...	72
31. Supposes his Creditor may dun him mechanically. . . .	11 ...	73
32. Tells him that he is a "dunning machine." . . .	10 ...	74
33. Relates how he contracted his debt. . . .	13 ...	75
34. Says his debt absorbs every other thought. . . .	14 ...	76
35. Enumerates the evils of life—consummated by debt. . . .	15 ...	77
36. Envies a child—for having no Creditor. . . .	16 ...	78
37. Sings—seeing it is in vain to grieve. . . .	17 ...	79
38. Laments he is not a bird—that he might fly off. . . .	18 ...	80
39. Promises his Dun he'll pay him—when he has money. . . .	19 ...	81
40. Wishes he had Gyges's ring, to make himself invisible to him. . . .	20 ...	82
41. Accounts for his Dun's perseverance against him. . . .	21 ...	83
42. Cares nothing about foreign news, but only about his debt. . . .	22 ...	84
43. Quotes Menenius and the Plebeians of Rome. . . .	23 ...	85
44. Thinks, if he had any children, they would resemble his Dun, from his being perpetually haunted by him. . . .	24 ...	86
45. His Dun appears to him in a dream. . . .	26 ...	87
46. Reasons with his Creditor on the uselessness of dunning him. . . .	25 ...	88
47. Regrets there is not a periodical extinction of debt. . . .	27 ...	89
48. Compares his debt to some excruciating pain. . . .	28 ...	90
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52. Compares his debt to the Perpetual Motion. . . .	32 ...	94
53. Says that he entered on his <i>grand climacteric</i> the day his Creditor lent him the Three Groats. . . .	33 ...	95
54. Implores Oblivion to let him forget his debt. . . .	34 ...	96
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56. Compares himself to a Mariner dreaming of storms. . .	36	98
57. Accounts for his constantly dreaming of his Dun. . .	37	99
58. Explains the pre-occupation of his brain by his debt. . .	38	100
59. Complains of the constant presence of his Dun. . .	39	101
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61. Laments the "good old times" previous to the existence of Duns, Bailiffs, Writs, and I. O. Us.	41	103
62. Says nothing in the World can let him forget his debt. . .	42	104
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64. Desires a Painter to take his Creditor's picture. . . .	44	106
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66. Complains that he uses him worse than would a Pirate. . .	46	108
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68. Desires he will have done teasing him, as he has no money. .	48	110
69. Thinks that his Dun can wind him a mile or two off. . .	49	111
70. Says his Dun continues to worry him all the same, tho the world is evidently drawing near its end.	50	112
71. Tells him that "Charity begins at home," so he must wait. .	51	113
72. Says that his debt, tho in itself small, is grown enormous, from his Creditor's always dunning him for it.	52	114
73. He cannot possibly avoid his Dun in so small a town. . . .	80	115
74. His friend Ergastes's letter gives him unwonted comfort. . .	77	116
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77. Thinks that the climate operates upon Creditors.	69	119
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80. Desires the same to send him Three Groats—post-paid. . .	72	122
81. Tells his friend that the ridding him of his debt would be an act of supreme virtue on his part.	61	123
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83. Ill-luck attends him again ; but he has done all he can. . . .	63	125
84. Regrets there is no truth in the Black Art, to pay his debt. .	64	126
85. Is convinced he draws his Creditor to him by attraction. . .	53	127
86. Desires the solution of this phenomenon, as there is no affinity whatever between them—but the contrary.	54	128
87. Says the Three Groats offers the only possible explanation. .	55	129
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90. Says that his Dun frightens him, as the sight of the hangman does the condemned felon.	58	132
91. Declares that his Dun plagues him alike at all seasons.	59	133
92. Tells him he is a most faithful—but plaguy Dun.	60	134
93. Says that people little guess the cause of his sadness.	65	135
94. Desires his friends to prove themselves so—by paying his debt.	66	136
95. Reminds them of the antient custom on such occasions.	79	137
96. He can solve no question of his Dun's—but about his debt.	68	138
97. Misleads him by an unusual appearance of expense.	73	139
98. Thinks that money has some affinity with the blood.	74	140
99. He can cure himself of every disease but his debt.	75	141
100. Having escaped from his Dun, every noise alarms him.	76	142
101. Imagines the surprise of people at the Pole, who should hear a voice dunning them when it thaws.	81	143
102. Thinks his lot the hardest of all mankind's.	82	144
103. Declares—as he has no money—his Dun shall never get it.	83	145
104. Thinks, if he had wings to fly, his Dun would follow him.	84	146
105. Says, the poorer he is—the more his Dun worries him.	89	147
106. Compares his debt to Paris's mischievous golden apple.	90	148
107. Thinks him a highly-gifted man who can refuse his Dun.	91	149
108. Deprecates the stocks and stones learning to dun him.	92	150
109. Says he is become case-hardened against his Dun.	85	151
110. Laments his Dun's eccentric—as frequent recurrence.	86	152
111. Tells him he would bear his debt better if less plagued for it.	87	153
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114. He vows a thanks-offering to Heaven if he can 'scape him.	94	156
115. Tells him his persecution is bad policy as well as cruel.	95	157
116. Some music he hears makes him forgetful of his debt.	96	158
117. No creature is ever so frightened—as he at his Dun.	97	159
118. Says his Creditor's visits have only his money in view.	98	160
119. Thinks "Platonic Love" is like the payment of his debt.	99	161
120. Tells his Dun that no annoyances can be compared to him.	100	162
121. All that he desires of Heaven is—riddance of his Dun.	101	163
122. Wishes he could find the Philosopher's stone—to pay his debt.	102	164
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125. Relates a frightful dream he has had. . . .	105 ... 167
126. Declares he'll turn hermit, and always deny himself to his Dun. 106 ...	16
127. Finds a proof of the Soul's immortality in his being dunned. 107 ...	169
128. Says his Language should be called the Tongue of "no." 108 ...	170
129. Says his Dun perseveres at impossibilities with him. . . .	109 ... 171
130. Wishes his Dun could have the gold-transmuting power of Midas, so not to plague him any longer. . . .	110 ... 172
131. Says the Quadrature of the Circle may be found, but never by any computation money on him. . . .	111 ... 173
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134. Says his Dun is learning French, to overreach him in that. 114 ...	176
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143. Thinks the Grecian Stoics, with all their fortitude, could never have put up with such a Creditor as his. . . .	123 ... 185
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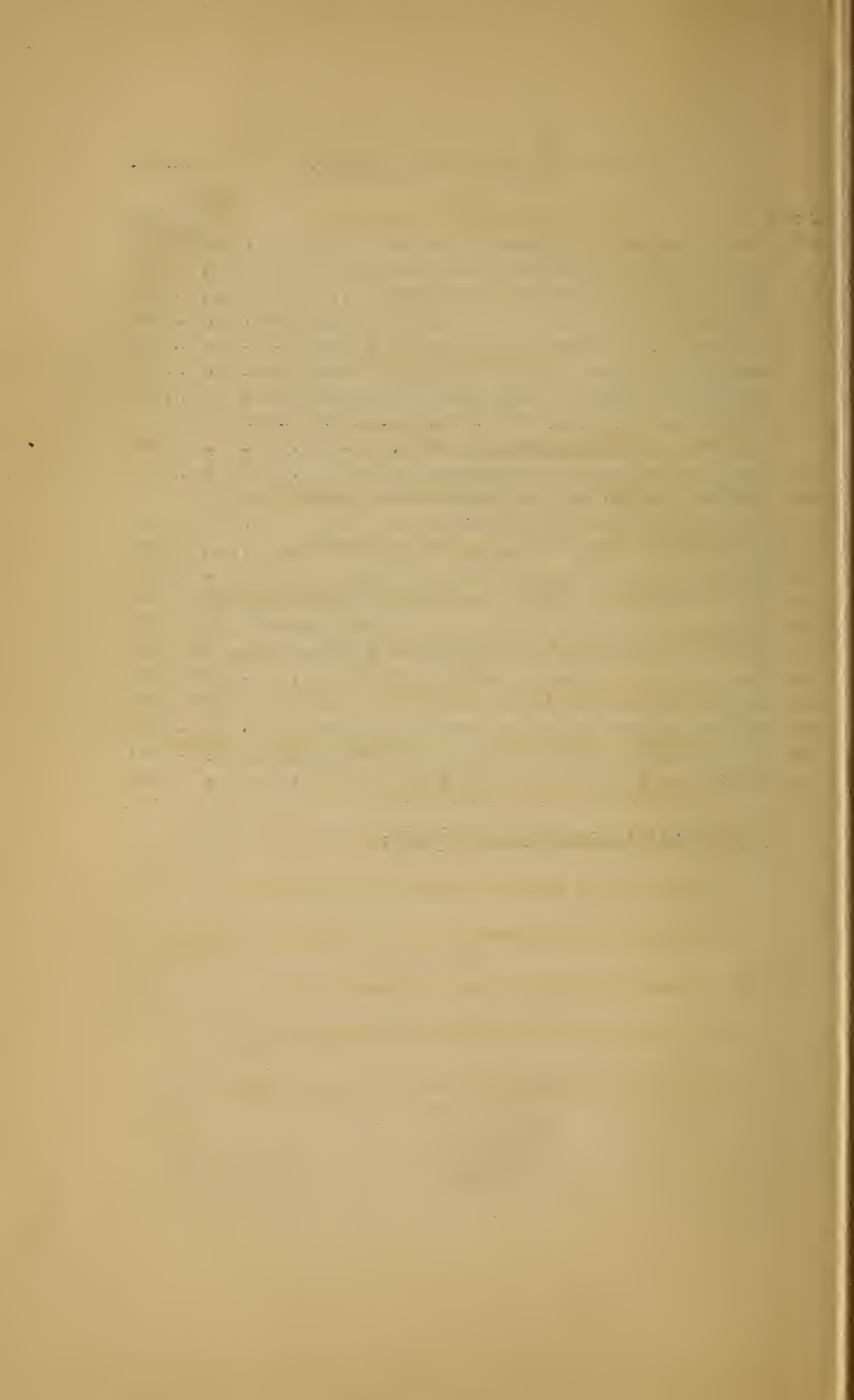
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159. Is resolved not to pay him—because he has no money.	139	... 201
160. Explains the reason of his insolvency to be—the want of cash: for otherwise he admits the debt.	140	... 202
161. He doubts which of them is most tired of the contention.	141	... 203
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163. Proposes peace to his Dun, but fears it will be in vain.	143	... 205
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167. Tells his Mistress that his debt has driven out his love.	”	... 209
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171. Doubts which gives him most concern—his love or his debt.	”	... 213
172. Apostrophizes his Mistress, on seeing some flowers.	”	... 214
173. Tells his Dun he has substituted himself for his Mistress.	”	... 215
174. Says that, if she be cruel, his song will turn upon his debt.	”	... 216
175. Tells her that he hates her jealous Cousin as much as his Dun, and therefor won't associate with him.	”	... 217
176. Says he forgets her when out of sight—but never his debt.	”	... 218
177. Promises to sing her, as soon as he gets rid of that.	”	... 219
178. Makes an appointment with her; as the weather is threat- ening, which will probably keep his Dun at home.	”	... 220
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181. Resolves to drown all his cares in wine.	Same...	223
182. Invokes Bacchus, with whose help he shall defy his Dun.	„ ...	224
183. Elated with wine, he sets him at defiance.	„ ...	225
184. Arranges how to crown his Dun King of plaguy fellows.	„ ...	226
185. Exorcises the spot where his Dun lent him the money. .	„ ...	227
186. Invites his Mistress to go upon the water—fearless of Duns.	„ ...	228
187. Prays for foul weather, that his Dun may stay at home. .	„ ...	229
188. Mourns that Spring returns in vain for him, on account of his Dun's importunities for payment.	„ ...	230
189. Traces his misfortunes to the origin of money.	„ ...	231
190. Tells his Creditor that—his laconic refusals are at least proofs of his sincerity, if nothing better.	„ ...	232
191. Keeps his Dun at bay, by amusing him with Sonnets. . .	„ ...	233
192. Tells him he shall be immortalized by dunning.	„ ...	234
193. Says that no feats would have given his name such celebrity.	194 ...	235
194. Accounts for his subject by its being uppermost in his mind.	195 ...	236
195. Tells his Dun that but for his song he would be forgotten.	196 ...	237
196. Desires his Dun to think himself about his debt.	193 ...	238
197. Says that his poetic vein is useless, as it will not pay his debt.	Same...	239
198. Describes the personal appearance of his Creditor. . . .	„ ...	240
199. Cautions persons against mistaking his motives for singing.	„ ...	241
200. Relates how Apollo desired him to have done.	„ ...	242

For The Additional Sonnets see Appendix.



PREFATORY SONNET :

BY WAY OF

PROLOGUE.

COME ye, with poverty's besetting sin,
All ye, that are in debt, and can't defray!
And ye, that love a laughter-moving lay!
The generous Muse relieves your wants herein.
Insolvent tho ye be of groat or grin,
Here shall ye find a wherewithal to pay;
Here raise your mirth—or raise the wind—ye may;
In either case assured to laugh or win.
Sure nobler theme than this was never sung!
THREE GROATS here are, from Italy that come,
Henceforth made current coin in England's tongue.
Her *Splendid Shilling* 's not a greater sum:
Thereon are full two hundred changes rung:
But read, and ye'll allow they're worth a plum.

THE HISTORY OF

THE

REIGN OF

CHARLES THE FIRST

BY JOHN BURNET

OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

IN TWO VOLUMES

THE SECOND VOLUME

CONTAINING THE

REIGN OF CHARLES THE FIRST

FROM 1625 TO 1649

AND THE

REIGN OF CHARLES THE SECOND

FROM 1660 TO 1685

AND THE

REIGN OF JAMES THE SECOND

FROM 1685 TO 1702

AND

THE REIGN OF WILLIAM THE THIRD

THE THREE GROATS.

SONNETS.

I. 1*.

LET others sing his pious deeds and bold—
And wars—Enëas did in Latium wage,
Whence empire and the city rose, of old,
That to the World gave laws in after age :
The feats of mighty Kings let these unfold ;
A pleasing face, or beauty, those engage ;
Far other tales must by the Muse be told :
Nor dreadful Mars nor Love employs her page.
This is the subject matter of my lay—
CHRY SOPHILUS one time *Three Groats* me lent,
And for them ask'd me a hundred times a day :
He kept on asking, and I would not pay :
And this importunate Dun 'tis my intent
Herein in various fashion to display.

* These Second Numbers refer to the Paris Editions.

II. 2.

If in my youth, ambitious then of fame,
In my more verdant and vivacious age,
The deeds and virtues did my song engage
Of heroes worthy an eternal name,—
My thoughts and mood henceforth no more the same,
No longer let me gravely act the sage,
But sing the woes my Dun inflicts (to assuage)
From that day he my Creditor became.
Thus Greece's mighty Bard : when, justly prized,
(If to great instances one may compare
Things that to such great types unequal are)
The feats in Phrygia that Achilles wrought
He'd—and Ulysses' name immortalized,
He sung about the Frogs and Mice who fought.

III. 3.

Hence, dreams—or fables, hence ! Others before
Have sung, while poesy their bosoms warmed,
How Jove, in bull and golden shower transformed,
Agenor and Acrisius wrong'd of yore ;
And far-famed Grecian youth, from Colchis' shore
That brought the golden fleece *Æëtes* charmed ;
And regal bird, tho angry Juno stormed,
That erst the beauteous boy to Olympus bore.

Armida's or Alcinous' fabled tales

Others have told : and honour waits the one
That with the greatest falsehood truth o'erweils.

Hence, dreams—or fables, hence ! whoever quotes :
Meanwhile the Muse relates in artless tone
The genuine story of the Triple Groats.

IV. 4.

Who would believe that hard and arid stone,
Which hath no principle of light nor heat,
Doth in itself inactive fires secrete
With luminous existence of their own !
For if__against another__one be thrown,
Or joining with the steel you sharply beat,
A stream of sparks burst forth whene'er they meet,
At each concussion, from the shock alone.
With his entreaties thus, by many a stroke,
Within my breast the dormant seeds of song
The Creditor of the Three Groats awoke ;
Whence soon a flame ignited clear and bright,
Till, burning round him vividly and strong,
Poetic Farthing-candles it did light.

V. 5.

Of yore an ardent thirst for noble fame
Within my heart I felt, whence glorious things
I hoped might come to pass, that on the wings
Of Time one day should tell the World my name ;
And wish'd, my bosom warm'd with generous flame,
To sing of arms___of Warriors___Chiefs___and Kings :
When this to other themes attuned my strings,
And made me for Three Groats divert the same.
But if such great designs did then inspire
With wish for glory, others move me now___
Works that can hope no glory to acquire.
Oh here, my Horace ! help me : while about
An Amphora, they were, say for me how___
Turning the lathe___a Pipkin issues out ?

VI. 6.

Without that pleasing and sublimest gift,
Which Nature but to few and seldom gave,
How shall I to that lofty sphere me lift,
Where noble souls alone to soar can crave?
Hence, if its bounties with penurious thrift
Heaven hath endowed me with, nor wings I have
Wherewith by flight to rise, I must make shift
To tune as best I may my present stave.
And if, since there the World run most, where are
The most ingenious whimsies—false altho',
Nor Truth will naked show herself and bare,—
Thence have I hoped, tho nothing else than these
Should recommend the Triple Groats, still so
Perhaps the charms of novelty may please.

VII. 144.

'Mong those whose skin is by the Sun embrown'd
From frozen Lapland take thy devious way;
And thence, where Phœbus runs his nightly round,
Pursue, till where he sheds his morning ray :
Deep in antiquity's abyss profound
With eager eyes explore ; and then survey
Thro every former age's ample bound,
Till gradually thou reach to our own day :
For their relation of the various things
Perform'd by Chieftains Emperors and Kings,
To history or to fable next advert :
And, Dun of the Three Groats ! wherever__now
Or then__one shall not find, I dare assert,
So troublesome a character as thou.

VIII. 143.

My Dun has surely nought to wonder at,
If, to his summons the Three Groats to pay,
He always hears from me an answer—that
Is of the self-same kind and quality:
Like one, who constantly shall sound *A* flat
Upon the hautboy or the organ, may
Expect the instrument to utter what
Will be the note that answers to flat *A*.
Thus every time my Creditor this way
One similar question makes me undergo,
He hears one similar tone, in answering notes
Yet still I don't repay him his Three Groats:
And, should he ask me a hundred times a day,
He'd hear a hundred times the self-same "NO."

IX. 147.

Should Heaven afflict me with the most severe
And dire adversities that could oppress,
And that obliged to beg my bread I were
About the town barefoot and breechesless ;
Oh Creditor of the Three Groats ! I swear—
That with indomitable cheerfulness,
Rather than ask an alms of thee, I'd bear
The most extreme necessity's excess.
For I have known too long, from all the smart
My debt continues to inflict, of yore,
What an unfeeling Creditor thou art :
Since every one must in his mind retain
His origin of ills : and, where before
The Ass has stumbled, he'll not trip again.

X. 148.

I've told thee good an hundred times and more
This same irrefutable truth, which is—
That with me since from some time past to this
The race of coppers is extinct and o'er :
Yet, notwithstanding that, thou wilt me bore
With thy insufferable importunities,
And pityless dost no occasion miss
Those villainous Three Groats to dun me for.
Perhaps thou wouldest drive me to despair,
And make me hang myself, that thou might'st spy
With halter round my neck depend in air ?
But in like manner thee I'll mortify :
For—now I'll never pay thee, that I swear :
So rather thou shalt hang thyself, not I.

XI. 149.

Whether of lovely Nymphs I be the guest,
That entertain me with their playful talk ;
Or take unseen my solitary walk,
Where noise nor tumult enters to molest ;
When Orient hails the Sun, or in the West
When Ocean waters quench his fiery track,
Those Triple Groats still haunt my mind, and balk
My heart continually of joy and rest :
His hateful likeness, who has ever been
The troubler of my peace and evil star,
Is always in my eyes as if there seen ;
A likeness that more horror dread and evil
Still causes, and to me is uglier far,
Than if 'twere Asmodeus or the Devil.

XII. 150.

Let folk say what they will : here is the man—
My dear Chrysophilus, and in good state
Of bodily health—still fresh and fat as late,
And self-same humour as it always ran :
Who want to find him—night or day they can
By coming where I be, they're sure of that ;
Who has no other business to be at
Than his Three Groats—his never-ceasing plan.
But hold thy tongue this once, in pity's sake :
For, 'pon my soul ! thou'rt such a horrid bore,
Thou'dst dry up Azoph or the Nubian lake.
This once do get thee from me far away ;
Nor ever come back hither any more
To pester me thy curs'd Three Groats to pay.

XIII. 151.

I do protest I cannot tell if from
This World to that a span may intervene :
I don't assert, nor think, whate'er the room,
There's a plurality of Worlds terrene ;
Nor if a mortal race there be, to whom
Our father Adam has not parent been,
With different laws to regulate their doom :
Nor if the Moon be peopled do I ween :
But, were it true, I'd covet to explore
The skies, a residence aloft to obtain,
Where I might hope to never see thee more :
Yet should I fear that, travelling thro the air,
In search of me, in Father Daniel's train,⁽¹⁾
Thou'dst come one day to find me out up there.

* * * For Notes see the End.

XIV. 152.

Since that the air, which I inhale this land on,
Doth make me sad—low-spirited—and weak ;
And since my Dun, whatever spot I stand on,
With cruel wrongs his spite doth on me wreak ;
Most certainly will I forthwith abandon
My parent soil and native city eke,
To find 'neath other skies—some other strand on—
That peace which here my heart would vainly seek.
But should I quit, so as to leave no trace
By which the Three Groats' Creditor, foil'd there,
Should know where I had gone,—I nothing doubt,
That, should he chance to learn my hiding place,
In Calicut or China tho I were,
He'd straight post-horses take and find me out.

XV. 146.

The gad-fly does not such a plague become,
What time the days are hottest in the year,
Nor is the hornet half so troublesome,
As is my Creditor about mine ear :
If grateful showers descend from skies of gloom,
The gad-fly and the hornet disappear ;
But never season varied in my doom,
To make my dunning Creditor forbear.
Perhaps, as by the gravitating power—
Whence bodies tend from their own nature lower,
Or by centripetal cohesion's laws,
So, by a natural affinity
(Or by attraction : who can tell the cause ?)
Thou tendest, Oh Chrysophilus ! to me.

XVI. 153.

As erst Orestes, who, when he had slain
The adulterer and his guilty mother both,
And so atrociously avenged that stain—
His murder'd father and her broken troth,
In exile wander'd, dragging in his train
The murderous Furies wheresoe'er his path,—
So I, where'er I go, the bitter pain
Must bear—my heart imprinted on it hath.
At length if, after all he underwent,
The Goddess (whom the Scythians wont adore
With human blood) towards him did relent,—
Why cannot also I some means explore,
And virtue—charm—or remedy invent,
Whence those Three Groats may sorrow me no more.

XVII. 154.

“ Now, Friends ! I bid you all a kind farewell ;

“ While far my steps I bend, reluctant tho :

“ Farewell, delightful Nymphs ! for I must go ;

“ Nor ’mong you more of me shall any tell.

“ To this distressing step doth me compel

“ The Triple Groats—that fatal debt I owe :

“ But nor the first I am, nor last, that so

“ For debt went into banishment to dwell.”

So saying, forth from the Town I sallied out :

But sad my Creditor appear’d behind,

And said—‘ I’ll go with you, an you permit.’

Then sorrowful again I turn’d about,

Exclaiming,—“ Is it then by Heaven design’d

“ That of this man I never shall be quit ?”

XVIII. 155.

When father Tiber heard the noisy lays

That here I weave, he rear'd his awful head

From out the oozy depths, did on me gaze,

His sceptre shook, and then as follows said.—

“ Here Ennius and Lucilius, in their days,

“ The Mantuan and Venusian, tuned the reed ;

“ When Rome could value poesy—and praise,

“ And the fine arts combined with valorous deed.

“ Since then have tuneful swans in every age,

“ With frogs commingled—owls—storks—crows—and cranes,

“ These shores and city deafen'd with their strains :

“ The Fair—Love—War—Chiefs—Kings, as subjects for,

“ And follies of the day, their songs engage :

“ There wanted yet a Three Groats' Creditor.”

XIX. 156.

Oh novel and felicitous event !—

For me most fortunate and joyful day !—

That fills my soul with gladness and content,

Dispelling all my woes, and making gay :

Chrysophilus to go from hence had meant ;

And now all ready had made to take his way ;

His wonted jerkin to put on he went,

And in the wardrobe his town-coat did lay :

His boots are on—with spurs he arms his heel ;

Then with one spring upon his nag he leaps,

And in his flanks the rowel makes him feel.

He goes !—when joy pours o'er me in such full tide,

As proves the mariner—when on the deeps

Dark clouds disperse and angry storms subside.

XX. 157.

Cease, angry winds ! to urge your furious fray,
Or ere from this my Creditor be gone ;
Let balmy zephyrs gently breathe alone,
Like those that in fresh April softly play :
Be mild the air, and tranquil be the day,
Let cloudless suns him shine serenely on,
And no adversities descend upon,—
At least till he be distant hence away :
Be his a pleasant journey, till, as plann'd,
He from me shall be far ; then rattle down
Hail—rain—and all the skies—upon his crown,
So he may ne'er come back : just as of yore,
The envoy crow, that went to look for land
From Noah's ark, was never heard of more.

XXI. 158.

Since that Chrysophilus is gone from this,
And I no longer see him on my beat,
Nor hear myself dunn'd for that cash of his,
While thro the Town I stroll in every street,—
In freedom and security of bliss,
Where'er I list I joyful turn my feet,
As doth the mouse—where'er the cat not is—
Go fearlessly nor cares whom it may meet.
Oh let him ne'er come back, for goodness' sake !
And, should he turn his steps towards the coast,
If in captivity the Turks should take,—
I do not wish him harm, but that, tho huff'd he,
So he might never here return, at most—
I wish they'd make him Grand Vizier or Mufti.

XXII. 159.

As doth some wretched city weep and wail;
When hostile ranks invest her, to reduce,
And with close siege beleaguer, and assail
With every method they can bring in use:
And in her as delight it doth infuse,
If afterwards the foe's assault should fail,
And they decamp, in vain their force or ruse,
To bear their arms where else they may prevail:
Such was my dread—my hatred—and my rage,
What time, Chrysophilus! upon the score
Of thy Three Groats thou didst me late engage:
And now—far from me—thou canst not annoy,
And that I see thy odious face no more,
Such is my pleasure—such my boundless joy!

XXIII. 160.

Postman ! are any letters there for me ?

‘ *Yes, one; a penny postage.*’ Here it is.

Let’s look who writes : alas ! what do I see—

’Tis from my Creditor, who writes me this.—

“ Get me the Three Groats ready (do not miss)

“ As soon as possible : for I shall be

“ By Sunday or Monday at latest, unremiss,

“ On horse or foot—dead or alive—with thee.”

Defend me, Heaven ! if, now he’s far from hence,

To plague me still he finds some new pretence,

Just as when near, tormenting with his notes,

And thro the post pursues me to repay :

So, while I don’t return him his Three Groats,

He makes me pay the interest this way.

XXIV. 168.

'Tis stated there are persons who have brewed
A liquor of such poisonous properties,—
That paper, saturated with the fluid,
Whoever reads—or even opens—dies.
Too few then are the common modes pursued,
To abridge the scanty term our days comprise ;
That cruelty, wherewith is Man imbued,
New methods of destruction must devise!
But I may say that not atrocious less
Nor cruel is my Creditor, whose trick
In this last instance wounds me to the quick :
For, while he writes to me, with menaces
The settlement of the Three Groats to press,
He gives me—by his letter—arsenic.

XXV. 162.

Hast ever seen the Father be away,
The while his Boy doth frolicsome engage
With those whom manners—minds—or equal age
Unites together there in wanton play?
Then suddenly, amidst the sportive fray
Should he appear, and mark with seeming rage,—
The Child, his Parent's anger to assuage,
Would fly—or hide, yet full of dread must stay.
Thus I in freedom lived and glad, while nought
My happiness disturb'd, for some time past,
And from me far my Creditor I thought :
And now that he comes back here to demand
As usual his Three Groats, with fear stuck fast,
Slinking away—afraid and mute I stand.

XXVI. 164.

Not Priam with such pleasure did exult,
What time the Grecian army turn'd away,
And ambush'd 'mong impervious rocks occult,
While Sinon took his measures to betray;
Nor afterwards such dreadful terror felt,
When—from th' insidious horse's womb—th' array
Of warriors burst, and led their friends' assault,
While fire and ruthless carnage strew'd the way;—
As I, my Dun ! rejoiced to my heart's core,
When thou didst late depart from me, as then
I flatter'd me to never see thee more ;
And now I prove a bitter sorrow, when
I see thee here return, still as before,
To pester me for the Three Groats again.

XXVII. 7.

Ye, who have heard my sorrowful lament,
And the complaints I've vented 'gainst my foe—
My cruel Dun—the cause of all my woe
E'er since the day that he Three Groats me lent !—
If never yet your bosom's calm content,
That Fortune and your partial fate bestow,
Has been disturb'd by any ills that flow
From hate—adversity—or accident,—
Ah ! never run in debt : but, to your sorrow,
If so compell'd, take care that first ye see
What natured man he is from whom ye borrow :
For, if a Dun whose worryings never cease,
'Twill be with you as it has been with me,—
Ye'll never have another day of peace.

XXVIII. 8.

While sorrows ne'er afflicted me, and while
I pass'd my days in happiness away,
My Muse in silence did the hours beguile,
Nor e'er was heard to wake the vocal lay:
But since the Three Groats' Dun (alas the day!)
Began to worry me, as he does still,
I've felt a singing itch within me sway,
And like the Cricket ⁽²⁾ at noon day I shrill.
So, while well-fitted and you duly grease,
All smooth and silent, as if at repose,
The wheel around its axle turns with ease:
But when along the road it cries and creaks,
Be sure there's something wrong, tho nothing shows,
To cause that ever jarring noise it makes.

XXIX. 9.

I, foolishly who some time since did boast
Of virtue in a stoical degree,
That made me feel insensible almost
To all misfortunes and adversity;
By some—I know not what—dire influence crost,
Am now no longer what I used to be,
And—thro a paltry debt—I’ve wholly lost
My once unalterable indifferency.
Sometimes perhaps th’ unconquer’d lion so,
When tiger—panther he has crush’d—or bear,
Victorious in each contest with the foe,—
Should some small gad-fly settle on some part—
Where not—his ear, him stinging, in despair
To drive it off—he yields and bears the smart.

XXX. 12.

That debt's an evil—there can be no doubt ;
All grant, and I've experienced it, I'm sure :
What then ? it is an ill that goes about ;
And common ills, all know, admit of cure.
So I, my debt of the Three Groats without
Complaint would bear and thereto me inure,
Had Heaven imposed on me some portion out
Of that calamity we all endure.
But, my vexatious Dun torments me so,
My tongue cannot dissemble what I feel
Of inward grief, but must express my wo :
Yet 'tis not of my debt—for that were vain—
(While here I make this pitiful appeal)
But thee, Oh Creditor ! that I complain.

XXXI. 11.

When there's an act one very often does,
The organs Nature fitted to that place
Perform their wonted task in every case
Without volition, how—one scarcely knows.
'Tis thus that to his crib the Donkey goes ;
That Parrots wish "*Good morning*;" and what was
But frequency will into habit pass ;
And that necessity from habit flows.
With arguments—no matter good or bad,
I often go soliloquizing thus :
Now hear the induction may from thence be had :
By rote he asks me for his Thrice a Groat,
(Since so my Creditor has 'custom'd us)
By rote I answer him—"I have them not."

XXXII. 10.

Since, Creditor ! you tease me thus and chase,
And from me fain would those Three Groats exact,—
Therein no action of the will takes place,
But only instruments corporeal act :
Just as the eye (to put an equal case)
Provided that no injuries affect,
Whatever object were before the face
Would out of mere necessity detect.
'Twas thus that some Philosopher achieved
The figure that he call'd *Automaton*,
Which acted by machinery of its own.
Therefor, that I no ear to what you ask
Will lend, against me do not feel aggrieved ;
Since you like a machine perform your task.

XXXIII. 13.

I never shall be able to forget

The memorable day, to me that bore

Such bitter sorrows, when my Dun, of yore,

Advanced me those Three Groats I owe him yet :

Three times them slow he from his purse did get,

Within himself recounting them, to score ;

And thrice return'd them in ; the while for more

Than half an hour he made me doubtful wait.

Whether or not he gave, I cannot say ;

For grief and rage so much my mind possess'd,

It took my faculty of sight away :

I only know that then all peace and rest

Forsook me ; and from thence I may, unblest,

Date all my woes up to the present day.

XXXIV. 14.

The whispering breeze that speaks in softest breath,
The verdant hill, the cool umbrageous vale,
The bird that spreads his pinion to the gale,
The brook that jets with bounding leap beneath,
And makes sweet music in its noisy fall,—
The dance and song of laughter-loving youth,—
At times, Oh Dun ! with calm delights these sooth
My mind, till thou coms't back to chase them all.
Thou marr'st my every joy: nor can my thoughts
A single moment wander 'way from thee,
But thither they return whence they but stray'd :
So that the constant thought of the Three Groats
Has made itself so natural to me,
As almost to be “ necessary ” said.

XXXV. 13.

Man ne'er was happy yet in any stage
Of life : a Boy—he trembles at a look ;
His freshest youth is wasted o'er a book,
Intent on science or the learned page :
In manhood's fervent prime new cares engage,—
With hatred now he burns—now love's soft yoke ;
Here akes and pains—there some disaster's stroke,
And growing ills that still increase with age :
At length come *Debts* ; and with them comes the day
Whencefrom no hope of happiness remains :
And thus I've led a life of varied woe ;
Till the Three Groats' dire debt, inapt to pay,
To all so long endured my ills and pains
Has given the *coup de grace* and finishing blow.

XXXVI. 16.

Unconscious Child ! that in thine early spring
Amusing thee—dost frolic thus and play,
Nor yet hast known corroding hatred's sting,
Nor gnawing cares that on our quiet prey :
O'er thy pure peacefulness its guardian wing
May Heaven extend, and ever lead thy way ;
Nor thee reserve for days that sorrow bring,
What time thy jetty locks shall turn to gray !
Oh happy Child ! how much I envy thee
The calm content that Heaven gives thee—heart-easing,
And tranquil peace that my sad heart has lost !
But what—dost think—I in thee envy most ?
'Tis that thou'st no one 'bout thee always teasing,
As—for Three Groats—I ever have 'bout me.

XXXVII. 17.

From far returning to his native town,
With song the Traveller cheers his toilsome way:
With song the thirsty Reaper cheers his own,
Exposed howe'er beneath the burning ray:
The Pilot sings; tho, his rude voice to drown,
He round him hears the furious tempest sway:
And, sighing tho for freedom long unknown,
The captive Bird still carols his sweet lay.
Thus mirthful lays I sing; tho now I've lost
The calm contentment I enjoy'd of yore,
And wonted peace my heart no more can boast:
And thus I mitigate my wretched lot,
Caused by my Dun's perpetual plague and bore;
Since 'tis all one whether I grieve or not.

XXXVIII. 18.

What time I pensive stand some bird to view,
That, hither bound, from Egypt coming last,
Or the Appenines or frigidous Alps has pass'd,
Doth rapidly thro air his way pursue, —
“Happy (I tell him) unto whom, as you,
“Heaven gave such boundless liberty and vast;
“That has nor clime nor soil to bind him fast,
“But takes his flight where'er it lists him do.”
Alas! why cannot I perform this trick?
To me why's equal liberty denied,
That here against my will must fain abide?—
Here unavoidably by day and night
Condemn'd by Fate eternally to stick,
And have my Dun of the Three Groats in sight!

XXXIX.⁽³⁾ 19.

Thou askest me for money (while I've none)
And lovest time in vain, which thou might'st save :
If thou an "*I promise to pay*" dost crave,
I'll make no bones at all to give thee one :
I neither grant thee nor refuse the boon ;
Since__what one never had__one never gave :
I promise that I'll pay thee when I have ;
And thou'rt content with my good will thereon.
Then let's have peace : nor let me thus be bored
For those Three Groats a hundred times a day :
When got'__I'll give them of my own accord.
Why wilt thou thus torment and wear me out ?
Why worry a poor devil in this way?
Canst not thou say__"Where nothing is__there's nought"?

XL. 20.

One day, the while his flock about him grazed,
A golden ring the shepherd Gyges found ;
Which, when he had upon his finger placed,
Made him invisible to all around :
And with this ring the wicked schemes he traced
Of all his after crimes, so much renown'd ;
The royal bed polluted and debased,
Usurp'd the throne, and made himself be crown'd.
Had I that ring—I would by no means be
So vile a rogue, nor use it, as did he,
For any such like purposes of crime ;
But make its virtue serve—that, when about
He goes to hunt for me at any time,
My Creditor should never find me out.

XLI. 21.

As, with a searching power to imbue
With its prolific warmth, the Sun doth dart
Its genial rays, and penetrate the heart
Of mountains of Golconda or Peru ;
And latent matter, there which lies perdu,
Doth clear and purge from every grosser part ;
Whence gold and purest gems, transferr'd by art,
On precious rings and regal crowns we view ;—
Thy parching hot activity and ardour
Doth penetrate and work into my bones,
And make my heart—already hard—still harder ;
And thence those aureate adamantine tones,
Wherewith I utter “ *NO*,” and whose off-warder
Makes thy Three Groats the hopelessest of loans.

XLII.⁽⁴⁾ 22.

Now that in fierce hostilities and jar
 With martial conflagration Europe burns,
The Peasant-Hind forsakes the plough he spurns,
 Girds him with arms, and marches to the war :
Curious of news from whether near or far,
 If arms the Muscovite—each person learns,
 If sails the English fleet—or if returns,
And what the French are at in Malabar ;
How many horse—how many foot are slain, .
 If with the Pruss the British be combined,
And if the King of France unite with Spain.
But little or nought of this employs my thoughts :
 By day or night—all that runs in my mind
Is my confounded Dun and his Three Groats.

XLIII. 23.

What time the People, by their debts weigh'd down,
From the Quirinal to the Sacred Mount
Retired, and left the Nobles in the Town,
(Their kings once banish'd on the same account)——

Menenius, by that apologue well-known
O' th' limbs and body, which he did recount,
Proved that Republics can (thus clearly shown)
Exist alone by union——force's fount :

And, of the peace then made, the abolition

Of all their debts *in toto*——full and free——

Was made the first and principal condition.

And thus, my Dun ! it stands with thee as yet :

Nor canst thou e'er return in peace with me,

Unless thou cease to talk about my debt.

XLIV. 24.

Lover of freedom that I still have been,
Ne'er nuptial ties have bound me to the Fair ;
And, should no progeny my loss repair,
'Twill do the world nor good nor harm, I ween :
But if that yoke, on others often seen,
(That yoke—so onerous to those who bear,
And pleasing but to them who do not wear)
I too had borne since when my youth was green,—
Perhaps, Chrysophilus ! that in that case
(Thy countenance hath so much fill'd my mind)
My Children would resemble thee in face ;
And I should see run 'bout the house and stun me,
Perpetuated in my proper kind,
So many little Creditors, to dun me !

XLV. 26.

I dreamt to be, a night ago or two,
Within a place delightful to behold :
Were songs, and games, and dances manifold,
With harps and flutes and hautboys playing to ;
Fair Nymphs and youthful, courting me to woo,
In playful talk did converse with me hold :
So fair a place the world doth not unfold,—
The Emperor has not sweets that can outdo.
While there I stood, enjoying the lovely sight,
Lo—suddenly my Creditor appears,
And stands before me, crying in my ears,
Dispelling this fair dream ! What ! stand—or go,
Whether I sleep—or wake, by day or night,
Must this confounded fellow plague me so ?

XLVI. 25.

Good Creditor ! do tell me—what's the use
To pester me for those Three Groats in vain
And still importunate, tho I refuse,
To storm and fume like any crow or crane ?
Then, prithee, now have done : nor longer thus
Keep dunning me, with loss of time and pain ;
Seeing hitherto for nothing all thy fuss
And clamour have avail'd to either's gain :
Thy worrying vails me nought—nor e'er has done :
Since, long as e'er thou wilt, keep asking still,
Thy asking ne'er the more my purse will fill ;
Nor on the other hand doth profit thee ;
For thy entreaties ne'er will work on me
To make me give thee money when I've none.

XLVII. 27.

I recollect to've in some Rabbi read,
 (Whom certainly thou never didst peruse)
That (tho abolish'd since, wherefor__not said)
 In ancient times a custom did they use
In each of their twelve tribes among the Jews,__
 After a certain space of years had sped,
Prohibiting__upon whatever views__
 To talk of debts up to that time unpaid.
Why have we not that glorious Jubilee?
 Why should not still that practice be the case,
And in our times and rituals take place?
Then what glad hope were mine!__that on the date
 When next this great solemnity should be__
The long Three Groats' affair would terminate!

XLVIII. 28.

Debt is not a disease to make one sick,
That hath apparent symptoms—to expel ;
It is nor epileptic—pleuritic,
Nor diagnostics hath whereby to tell ;
It hurts nor fluids nor the solids thick ;
(*Exempli gratia* : in myself—I'm well)—
Nor makes the blood flow slower or more quick,
When duly circulating in each cell :
It is a heart-ake of the keenest kind ;
To which no other pain can be compared,—
An inward rack, that night and day doth grind ;
And, more or less tho all know, none but he
Its just idea can form—as having shared,
Who has a plaguy Creditor like thee.

XLIX. 29.

However keen—all pleasures pall with use :

Nor is there aught, our dearest joys among,
That doth not cause disgust and loathing strong,
By frequent repetition and abuse.

Tho purest sweets at first they may infuse—

The gentle breathings of melodious song,
When listen'd on too often or too long,
Attract no more, nor longer can amuse.

How great then is his wretchedness, who must

Endure what never can delight nor please,
And of itself alone creates disgust !

Now this is just my case—that truce nor peace,

Sad Dun ! ne'er have from thee ; nor wilt thou cease
To claim those due Three Groats, nor give me trust.

L. 30.

Whether it be some diabolic spell
Bewitches thee for ever to pursue,
Misfortune—Fate—or what, I cannot tell,
But know—where'er I am—there thou art too :
Thus to escape thee, hateful Dun and fell !
To India if I go, or to Peru,
Where human foot ne'er comes, nor mortals dwell,
Never to hear thee more, nor more to view,—
There, 'midst the silent waste as I repose,
And loud of thee, my Creditor ! complain,
And give loose freely to my pent-up woes,—
My voice's sound struck backward seems to say,
Returning from her distant depths the strain,
That Echo asks me the Three Groats to pay.

LI. 31.

While Echo asks me the Three Groats to pay,
Nor any one I see that asks me for,
My mind is dubious if illusion—or
If truth it should be deem'd, or what it may:
Dispelling then all previous doubts, I say—
“ If my impressions now be real, nor
“ My senses be defective, this therefor
“ Is no fantastical deception's sway.”
Then I proceed to draw this inference,—
If there be no one here that voice who woke,
Who could have utter'd it?—from whom—or whence?
At length I see its origin it owes
To my complaints; it was myself that spoke:
And in this way I feed my proper woes.

LII. 32.

If possibly (as some there are suppose)
In nature a perpetual motion be,
That circulates perforce continually,
Returning to itself the way it goes,—
Perhaps I must for ever weep the woes
The ne'er-have-done Three Groats inflict on me ;
Since, while I would dispread them outwardly,
They still come back to whence they first arose.
Thus, passing from the heart within the brain,
Thence vocal made, they from the lips go forth
To bodies opposite, nor fall to earth ;
But, striking there the auditory part,
They on the ear come repercuss'd again,
And from the brain return into the heart.

LIII. 33.

What nonsense is maintain'd by those and these

'Bout *Climacteric Days*⁽⁵⁾! 'tis all my eye!—

Their idle thoughts, and foolish fantasies,

Who to promote some Quack's delusions try.

When Providence establish'd its decrees,

To this time or to that it did not tie :

One may be born on any day you please,

And every day 'tis possible to die.

But, without more inquiry in the case,—

If that be call'd one's "Climacteric Day"

On which some great calamity takes place,—

That, by a Dun who no compunction has,

When I was lent Three Groats—and to repay,

For me a *Climacteric Day* that was.

LIV. 34.

Now from us the bright sun departs away
And in the lap of Thetis lays his head,
While in the skies the silver moon bears sway,
And night begins her dusky veil to spread,—
The Reaper who has borne the scorching ray,
And Ploughman who his team or share has led,
Fatigued with heat and labour of the day,
For rest extend them on their lowly bed :
Now that the darkness of the silent night
To sleep, that nature gave for the relief
Of human woes, doth soothingly invite,—
Oblivion soft ! on me descend, and set
At rest my every care and source of grief,
With all remembrance of the Three Groats' debt.

LV. 35.

Oh balmy Sleep ! beneath whose healing wing
Man finds relief from keen affliction's rack,—
From the Cimmerian depths of night come back,
And o'er my sense thy drowsy pinions fling :
But with thee not thy changeful Morpheus bring ;
Who can such manifold disguises take,
That in my busy fancy he'll awake
The Three Groats' recollection and its sting.
For, if in dreams, whene'er my eyes I close,
I still must fear and tremble in this way,
Nor have from thee the comfort of repose,
Sleep ! get thee gone : if thou canst not remove—
I will not thou augment my ills of day ;
I've now too great—not greater let me prove !

LVI. 36.

When, for more peaceful days and calm repose,
Safe to his native shore return'd at last,
The Seaman, long accustom'd in time past
To list the waves when tempest-lash'd they rose,—
If on the yielding down his limbs he cast,
In busy dreams, soon as his eyelids close,
He thinks to hear the winds disturb his doze,
And billows foam responsive to the blast.
Thus I, for some time back up to this day
Accustom'd to endure—Heaven knows what ills!
Oh Creditor! about thy claim to pay;
In sleep still present to my fancy seems
That face of thine, which me with terror fills,
And duns me for Three Groats e'en in my dreams.

LVII. 37.

'Tis natural my dreams should take their hues
From what my eyes have seen and ears have heard;
Since dreams are but what has by day occur'd,
That—alter'd then in sleep—the mind reviews;
Then busy Fancy to itself renews
What previously the sense had there transferr'd :
In dreams the Fowler thus ensnares his bird ;
And Warrior thus in dreams his foe pursues.
But 'tis surprising how, when wide awake,
And Fancy wanders on the various things
That on my senses an impression make,
The thought of thee to my remembrance clings,—
Thy face before me night and day makes quake,
And in my ear “ *Where's my Three Groats?*” still rings.

LVIII. 38.

That spirit of pure blood, most active—clear—
And vigorous, which supplies the nerves,—from whence,
Whate'er external objects there appear,
An impulse to the organ gives, and thence
At once the motus to the brain doth bear,
And print an image in, alike intense,
Whatever be the thing you see or hear,
As oft as outward objects strike the sense.
Thus every time my avaricious Dun
Demands me his Three Groats, the ear it wakes ;
Whence the sensation to the brain doth run,
And there (as I'm inclined to think . and tell him)
A long and wide and deep impression makes,
That takes up nearly all the cerebellum.

LIX. 39.

Thence 'tis I recollect the spot and day
My Dun lent me Three Groats; whereof so plain
An image and a lively I retain,
As of a thing now present to survey;
Which wholly doth my imagination sway,
And occupies the cellules of the brain,
That still my thoughts recur to that again,
Howe'er to other objects they may stray:
That, wheresoe'er I bend my steps or be,
Mine eye—mine ear—gives nothing to my thoughts
But this tormenting Dun and his Three Groats ·
And, by this spell which Fancy keeps o'er me,
Tho not always before me on the spots,
If not elsewhere—in my mind's eye I see.

LX. 40.

In Pluto's realms a streamlet gently flows,
Along the Elysian Fields' delightful shore,
Where (when the soul and body part) who goes,
For certain years returns to Earth no more,—
Whose waters, as the Grecian bards suppose,
Such admirable virtue had of yore,
That who should take one draught thereof would lose
All memory of whate'er had been before.
Ah ! were that still the case up to this day,
I'd go this very hour ; and with me take
A keg, to fill it there and bring away,
And give it thee to drink, to make forget
Unfeeling Dun ! for once (if aught could make)
The old Three Groats' interminable debt.

LXI. 41.

Oh blissful days—what time Queen Bertha spun !⁽⁶⁾

Most fortunate and highly favour'd season !

That age hight antiently the “golden” one ;

No doubt—because so happy—was the reason :

No “*I. O. U.s*” were then, nor “*Writs*,” to dun ;

Nor frequent law-suits, such as now, with fees on ;

Nor people then were summons'd, should they run

In debt, nor lost their liberty in prison.

But times are changed, not now what once they were :

And woe to that poor devil who gets in debt !—

For he must go to jail and perish there !

And should his Dun not be so hard on, yet

He plagues him night and day, wherever met,

As thou dost me—pursuing every where.

LXII. 42.

Propitious Heaven ! assist me, and withal
From dangers guard, as hitherto Thou'st done.
But as in life ne'er yet was any one
Exempted from mishaps, nor ever shall,—
So should I get from some high place a fall,
And hurt my head—neck—foot, or break a bone,
Whene'er the pain the bruise had caused were gone,
I'd think but little of—or not at all.
But, tho oblivious age and time can drive
Each other thought away, yet from my debt
I cannot turn my thoughts nor thus forget ;
For, its remembrance in my memory
My Dun has hitherto kept quite alive,
And frequently refreshes every day.

LXIII. 43.

Should Death not play me such a scurvy trick,
As 'midst my youthful years to make me die ;
But on the contrary 't be writ' on high
That I to good old age continue quick ;
About the city, leaning on my stick,
With hanging head and bending back, I'll ply,
No longer recollecting times gone by,
With length of years my memory now grown weak ;
The memorable Three Groats' debt (to pay)
Alone rememb'ring, and thus annually
My case to my Grandchildren shall I state.—

“This was for me a very fatal one:

“Alas, my Sons ! my sorrows took their date

“From this sad day, and never will have done.”

LXIV. 44.

One day I to a Limner thus—‘ I want,
‘ An you be a clever Artist and true Man,
‘ A portrait of th’ uncomeliest face and gaunt
‘ That e’er was seen since when the World began :
‘ Make it the hideousest phisiog: you can,
‘ With goggle-eyes, and nose turn’d up askaunt :
‘ Nor shall I be content save uglier than
‘ Thersites you depict him, all to daunt :
‘ In short, so closely after nature give
‘ The likeness of my hated Dun and bore,
‘ That I may think I see him there alive.
‘ Then, seeing that frightful countenance he has,—
“ Bravo ! (I’ll say) good Brush ! I want no more :
“ Here is the ugliest face that ever was !”

LXV. 45.

I've seen a savage race ; who faith have none,
And little honour whatso hallowed name ;
A race, in part who from that country came
Where formerly reign'd Attila the Hun :
Their visage is a coffee-colour'd one,
With looks ferocious and mustach's the same ;
And lengthy cloaks they wear about their frame,
That from the neck down to the ankles run.
This way that cruel people pass'd along,⁽⁷⁾
What time they the Sicilian King assailed ;
An enterprise which ultimately failed :
Nor 'mong them did I see a single wight
Who caused me such a dreadful fear and strong
As doth my Creditor's terrific sight !

LXVI. 46.

Algiers—and Tunis—Tripoli—Salé,

Places that lie where are the days most hot,

So brute a race of men perhaps have not,

As brutal is my Creditor with me :

This man not born like other men could be ;

But in ill-will and rancorousness begot',

By one that ne'er suck'd mercy's milk, I wot,

And daily made him bad examples see.

The Barbary pirate, when he makes a slave,

Robs him of cash that he may find on one,

But does not want his money when h' has none :

But, using me more cruelly than a pirate,

My Dun don't care whether or not I have ;

When I've no money—still doth he require it.

LXVII. 47.

That which erewhile held such impetuous sway,
And hoary Alps in ice imprison'd fast,—
Stern Winter's dreary reign, at length is past ;
And April comes again, with laughing May:
That which, when nearer, glowed with scorching ray,
And on the stem the wither'd flowret cast,—
The burning Sun, gets lower down at last,
And cheers the languid with a cooler day.
The World's vicissitudes in constant change
Thus still succeed, and every ill below
Is not one long interminable woe :
'Tis thou alone that thy Three Groats to claim
Didst once begin, with that one only range,
Which never ends—but still goes on the same.

LXVIII. 48.

Oh ! well for me that of fair Italy's land
My Dun and I are natives ; nor of yore
Born when the World was young, in times before,
Three thousand years ago, on Egypt's strand :
For, then, when I had come to be no more,
Nor leave wherewith to settle his demand,—
I should have been left bleaching on the sand,
There to this day, until defray'd the score.
But, 'no : thank Fate ! and should I go, hence hurried,
Ere rich enough my Three Groats' debt to pay,
He cannot hinder me being duly buried :
He neither can arrest me for them now,
Nor stop my interment : so, whatever way,
Alive or dead, I'll bilk him any how.

* * Substituted for the Original. See "Sketch etc.:" p. xxvi.

LXIX. 49.

That from all bodies an effluvium flows—
Is in philosophy no idle tale ;
From thence a perfume mingles with the gale
From cedar—aloe—lily—or the rose :
Since all the lighter particles, and those
Which have the most subtilty, exhale
From bodies, the olfactory nerve assail,
And make an odorous pulsion on the nose.
Thus, tho' not ill as yet my numbers go,
It must be own'd that ever and anon
From me some such exude : is it not so?—
Whose scent, go where I will, lies far behind :
And this, good Dun ! thy nares impinging on,
Thou for a mile—or farther—dost me wind.

LXX. 50.

Oh my Chrysophilus ! from some time past
Till now the land gives gradually worse crops ;
And blight—drought—hail—combine themselves to blast
And disappoint the afflicted Farmer's hopes :
The antient oaks no longer shed their mast ;
The vine no longer yields its wonted grapes ;
And enmities of rival nations fast
Enfeeble trade, and cramp in various shapes :
The aged Granny by his faith doth swear—
“ That formerly were never times like now ;
“ And to its end the world is drawing near.”
All persons now impending danger shun :
Now every creature weeps and wails : yet thou
The heart hast me for those Three Groats to dun !

LXXI. 51.

That *Charity begins at home* is true :

And we are bound, ere others we relieve,

Towards our own necessities to give ;

Wherein the law of Nature we pursue.

In duty, then, and to myself 'tis due

To mind myself ere thee or aught alive :

And every creature does so who would thrive ;

As equity and justice have in view :

When I shall have provided for myself,

If any overplus of cash there be,

My dear Chrysophilus ! I'll give it thee :

But, if for that (nor thou canst do without it)

Thou wait'st,—so scanty is my superfluous pelf,

'Twill be much best to think no more about it.

LXXII. 52.

If on the legs—arms—throat—or on the face,
There should appear the slightest pimple—sore—
Or humour ; and you feel and pick and bore
A hundred times a day, it thence to erase ;
And it should itch, nor will you from the place
Your nails or fingers keep, but scratch the more ;
The wound, that small and trifling was before,
At length inflames and grows a serious case.
'Tis thus my debt of the Three Groats, to wit,
Oh my Chrysophilus ! most certainly,
Abstractedly if we consider it,
Is no such mighty debt for which to dun ;
But thy insufferable importunity
Makes it a most considerable one.

LXXIII. 80.

The Bird, when from afar some Hawk he views,
That thro the sky in spreading circles sweeps,—
While in full freedom and at large he keeps,
His fierce assailant easily eschews :
But when shut up together, to amuse
Those—cruel—who delight in others' scrapes,
The wretch has from his foe no more escapes,
Nor can the dire encounter then refuse.
Thus, pent within a narrow city's bounds,
Four streets—a square—and single inn—for rounds,
We turn and turn about and still are there :
'Tis thus that I and my Three Groats' hard Dun
A hundred times a day meet every where ;
Nor is it possible for me to shun.

LXXIV. 77.

Your letter, my Ergastes ! duly got',
That you had charged Lesbinus to convey,—
Has given me such delight as I may say
I never felt before, for I had not :
Eager I read it thrice and once to boot,
Nor can I from my hand aside yet lay :
It seems it virtue has to pluck away
The bitter grief that in my heart takes root.
And I may state—that from (unsettled yet)
The day I made that paltry Three Groats' debt,
Which has occasion'd me so much ill blood,
Till now no other pleasure have I known,
Nor any happiness has been my own,
But that your friendly letter has bestow'd.

LXXV. 67.

The true regard that for me you display,

I feel, my dear Ergastes ! nor can doubt :

Moreo'er, if you desire to hear about

And have some news of me, this shall convey.

Then, Heaven be praised ! I'm well : that is to say—

I've neither fever—pains—a cold—nor gout ;

I suffer from no akes of head or foot ;

Nor have my humours undergone decay.

But, tho I can't deny my general run

Of case is good, yet nothing can be worse :

I'm out of money ; and a plaguy Dun

Is ever at my side ! disasters, these—

A worrying Creditor and empty purse—

Equivalent to some severe disease.

LXXVI. 78.

“ Now then, Ergastes ! learn that I intend

“ To quit this place at once and altogether :

“ For I can bear no longer, nor will—either,

“ My Dun’s annoyances, that never end.”

Thus in soliloquy my way I wend,

And think within myself, when I get thither,

I shall not mind however bad the weather,

Nor be afraid tho furious Mars impend :

For there at least there will be none to bully,

Nor frighten me with his terrific snout,

As doth my Three Groats’ Creditor most cruelly :

And, if I still must run in debt e’en there,

I shall not have such Duns (Heaven keep them out !)

As is the one here haunts me every where.

LXXVII. 69.

I'm very certain, and have long opined
That, should one search the World by land and sea
Ever so long a time, one ne'er would find
So thoro-paced a Creditor as he.
Whence often I revolve within my mind—
That if diversity of clime it be,
Which gives to every nation its own kind
Of minds and manners that therewith agree :
Whence is the Assyrian and the Persian weak—
The Thracian savage—and mendacious Greek,
And Rome ere while could boast of valorous sons ;
Not less perhaps this clime—these skies—all here
Combines to make our native home-bred Duns
Of stuff inexorable and severe.

LXXVIII. 70.

But, 'mong all these, my Three Groats' Dun (I say),
With whom no other Creditor compares,
Has signalized himself in such a way
That justly the pre-eminence he bears.
To have a Creditor about one's ears,
As I to my mishap have night and day,
Is such a sticking plague where it adheres,
I can't conceive a worse—be it what it may.
No miseries have still one unchanging season;
And soon or late or other evils cease:
But my eternal Dun is none of these,—
He's a perpetual plague—for ever tease on;
Nor day nor night will let me breathe in peace,
Nor will he listen or to rhyme or reason.

LXXIX. 75.

You—that are so well vers'd in logic's art,
 (Wherewith men oft say *Yea* where meaning *Nay*)
And know the proper rules by which one may
Convince them of the truth one would impart:
For goodness' sake assist me to concert
 Some syllogism, or what not, to say
 In *baralipton*, or some other way
 Of argument, that none can controvert:
That my Three Groats' hard Creditor at length
 May understand, if hitherto he 've not,—
 He cannot get from me what I've not got;
And being at last, than which can none be stronger—
 Persuaded of this reasoning's obvious strength,
 He hold his tongue, nor for them ask me longer.

LXXX. 72.

But, when my Dun`s determined to say “ *No*,”
All the philosophers and orators whom
Old Rome or Greece of yore e`er listened to,
Would not subdue him, nor a “ *Yes* ” get from:
And Aristole`s stick ⁽⁸⁾ alone will do,
Such pertinacity to overcome ;
Which oft the obstinate converted so,
And wrought prodigious miracles with some.
So, if you `ll do a charitable deed,
(For which I`ll speak such things to your good fame,
As to the very stars shall raise your name)
Send me Three Groats per post: and, which will make it
A favour then complete (moreo`er “ with speed ”)
Mind—pay the postage; as I then shall take it.

LXXXI. 51.

Who doth the hungry's empty stomach fill,
And with refreshing drink is ever quick
To bathe the thirsty's arid lips, and will
Th' incarcerated visit and the sick;
Who clothes the naked's limbs, to guard from chill;
Who succours the distress'd, dries sorrow's cheek,
Inters the dead that lie unburied still,
And comforts the disconsolate and weak;
Who gives good counsel with instruction fraught,
And in the paths of virtue doth lead back
Those who had wander'd from and lost the track,—
Doth not such work of loving kindness do,
Compassionate, as would, Ergastes! you
To take from me the Three Groat's worrying thought.

LXXXII. 62.

Rejoice with me, my friends! for I've found out
A certain means wherewith I now can pay:
Henceforth my Dun, his Three Groats to defray,
No longer round me shall be seen to scout.
Three numbers, ⁽⁹⁾ that for me she dreamt about,
The Beldame boldly gave me t'other day.—
“Hallo there—Shop! hallo! who's there?” I say.
“I want these numbers—make the tickets out.”
But now the day of drawing's come: and lo—
The carrier brings the news around; let's see
What my three tickets have produced: Ah me!
Blanks every one! Whence all my expected gains
Are vanish'd. Ah! I fear'd it would be so:
My hopes are fled—the debt alone remains!

LXXXIII. 63.

But let's not be discouraged, come what will:

Tho for this time we've not obtain'd a prize,

I'll try a novel scheme—a better still;

Another time it shall be otherwise:

A certain friend has taught me his own style

Of conjuring, which never fails—he says.

Meantime, good Creditor! but wait a while,

Thou shalt be paid within not many days.

But look: the winning numbers ⁽⁹⁾ now are stuck

Upon the office: Ah! what do I see —

Not one of mine's turn'd up: what shocking luck!

Now mayest thou see, and judge by this result,

That I have done whatever lay in me;

And, if I cannot pay, 'tis not my fault.

LXXXIV. 64.

Vain wishes and illusive hopes they feel,
Who search the future out of numbers, as
Rutilius—Ptiscus—Picus, and that class,
Who in the cabalistic science deal.
What is at present, whether woe or weal,
Exist from no connexion with what was;
Nor ever—what one day shall come to pass—
Numerical combinations can reveal.
For, were it aught but vain, as all such ways are,
I'd work more sums than ever did of yore
Hoseim—Solomon-Shah—or Albumazar⁽¹⁰⁾.
And could I by that means, unknown before,
Discharge the old Three Groats' long standing score,
“Oh, dear Cabala! Happy me!” I'd say, Sir!

LXXXV. 53.

Let those, who will, attraction's force maintain,—
That heavy bodies downwards gravitate,
While some move upwards from their lighter weight,
And some—towards each other drawn—remain:
For, this effect or that-one to explain,
Unknowing of the means that operate,—
From antient times up to the present date,
Was ne'er the gift of any doctor's brain.
But I believe; nor do I want for this
That Newton should assure me it is so;
Nor need I seek elsewhere what cause there is;
For by myself I ascertain the fact,—
That, sympathetically, where'er I go,
My Dun of the Three Groats I still attract.

LXXXVI. 54.

All bodies, it is true, do not possess

That hidden virtue in the same degree;

In some 'tis greater seen—in others less,

And some—that have it not at all—we see.

So I, Chrysophilus! observe in thee

A property of strong repulsiveness;

That has heterogeneous been to me,

And always made me fly thy near access.

Thou still dost follow me, while still I fly;

And when away from ever and anon—

Within thou still art present to my eye!

What's then the secret cause? or who can solve

The riddle of this strange phenomenon?

Philosophers! on you it must devolve.

LXXXVII. 55.

Should some one question of the famous sages
That learned Greece in antient times possessed,—
He'd tell you all their calculating mages,
And who the sciences occult professed ;
And, should he ask from those of modern ages,—
He'd tell you who the atoms' theory guessed,
Who traced attraction thro its various stages,
And who that electricity confessed :
Then, with these principles, up would he get
On his two legs, therewith to make appear
En philosophe the whys and wherefors clear.
But uselessly,—this nothing solves the doubts :
Alone he may the effects and cause of “ debt ”
Explain—who seeks them in the Triple Groats.

LXXXVIII. 58.

The fearful hare, or kid, when from the brake
The hunter's dog has started, turns and veers
Now up—now down—this way and that to take,
And swift—as if her feet were wing'd—careers :
But still the dog, ne'er losing scent nor track,
Follows her close, and closer still he nears,
Pursues o'er ford or path, or drives her back,
And now in front—and now in flank appears.
Thus I this way or that in terror run,
In hopes, my Creditor ! to leave behind—
Or not to meet thee : but I vainly shun ;
For still I cross thee a hundred times a day :
So much that I suspect within my mind
Old Nicholas whispers thee—“ *He's gone that way.*”

LXXXIX. 59.

Philosophers hold that—if in one place

One body is, another is elsewhere :

Two bodies being quite separate, in no case

A single one can be both here and there.

Moreo'er of that should any person care

To know the physical reason, 'tis to trace

But, not to wait the causes to declare,

Suffice we know the fact—as on its face.

Yet, if the thing were otherwise than so,—

(To cite a case in point) I should pronounce

One body may be here and there at once ;

For, by the body o' me ! now there as well—

And now I find thee here, where'er I go :

But how the devil thou dost—I cannot tell.

XC. 58.

The false Pashah turns pale with guilty fears,
Of crime too conscious, suddenly to whom
In presence comes the Capigi, who bears
The fatal string that indicates his doom.
The Convict quakes, where his sad days he wears
In galling chains, within the dungeon's gloom,
What time the Executioner appears
With blade in hand that he must suffer from.
And learn, my Three Groats' Creditor ! once more,
That not less terrors into me infuse,
When all at once thou dost appear before :
I tremble with affright whene'er I see !
Nothing alarms me more than that ; because
I view my Executioner in thee.

XCI. 52.

What time the Sun, when fiercest and most strong

In middle August, shoots his downward ray,

The Cricket ⁽²⁾ chirping sits upon a spray

Of crab-tree or the medlar's leaves among,—

“Hush!” (then I tell it) “For thy noisy tong’

“Renews the woes that He, from that first day

“He’s been my Creditor, in this same way

“Has made me bear with one incessant song.”

At length come shorter days and cooler skies :

And that annoying cry at length has done,

And the tormenting noisy Cricket dies :

But ah ! still my old plague—just as at first,

Despite my summer and my autumn gone,

Goes on, nor has my Creditor yet burst !

XCII. 60.

While bright thy days shall shine all calm and clear,
While Fortune shall be kind and stand thee by,
The servile crowd shall still surround thee near
That hang on others in prosperity:
But if, till then serene and fair, that sky
Now girt with storm-betokening clouds appear,
In thy misfortunes from thee far shall fly
Who followed in thy prosperous career.
Oh faithful Dun of the Three Groats! I may
And will to thy just glory ever say—
That one so constant I ne'er saw before:
For, whether Fate is kind to me or not,
Thou art inseparable from: tho, I wot,
This same fidelity doth somewhat bore.

XCIII. 65.

When sombre melancholy me invades,
That from my breast nought else can pluck away,
I seek the depths of solitary shades,
Like one who hates himself and light of day:
Thus, silent—lone—and sad, while grief corrodes
My aking heart, unconscious I display
The weight of sorrow that my bosom loads,
And which not less my pallid cheeks betray.
Then if some Clown, who gleans the scatter'd ear,
Should mark me wand'ring thus, within himself
He says—"This is some desperado elf!"
And if I've cord or weapon takes he heed:
Nor e'er imagines, wondring in his fear,
That from Three Groats my sorrow can proceed.

XCIV.⁽¹¹⁾ 66.

To hide me from my Creditor's sharp view,

Since I no longer stroll about the town,

One thus consoles me as I lie perdu.—

“ A man of spirit ne'er should be cast down :

“ People, who are much more in debt than you,

“ Strut with assurance and an air high flown ;

“ And treat their Creditors, should they pursue,

“ So—that you doubt which party claims his own.”

Then him I thus respond to : ‘ But if I

‘ Have not—like that—a temper frank and free,

‘ In vain to change my nature I should try:

‘ But rather be one ’mong you, who, to end,

‘ Will pay my debts: and then I'll say him by—

‘ *This is the mirror of a real friend.*’

XCV.⁽¹¹⁾ 79.

Nor were this glorious practice I denote—

A novel one, but only here renewed ;

For, in antiquity the most remote,

At Athens, on a time it was pursued :

If any of them into debt had got,

The faithful band of friends ⁽¹²⁾ paid what he owed,

And all his wants supplied where he could not ;

Which a magnanimous example showed.

But tho, when Rome Decemvirs instituted,

(Her kings expell'd eleven lustres ere)

And that great embassy to Greece deputed,

Whence that famed Law o' th' Tables ⁽¹³⁾ was obtained,

They brought new laws and usages from there,—

Alone among the Greeks its use remained.

XCVI. 68.

My Creditor is frequently inclined

With me in physical matters to explore ;

He wants to know what makes the thunder roar,

And what the causes that occasion wind,

The various shades of colours who combined,

And whether Tycho Brahe's system—or

That which gives motion to the world—the more

Consonant with reality I find.

I tell him then—“ Who can make manifest

“ Nature's arcana ? or upon the spot

“ Determine if the sun go round or not ?

“ I'm only sure of this—as you know best—

“ You want from me Three Groats, which I've not got :

“ I know nothing at all about the rest.”

XCVII. 73.

My Creditor, observing me display
Unwonted liberality of pence,
Thinking to avail himself of that pretence,
Persisted asking his Three Groats to pay:
Then, almost speaking truth,—“ It was that thence”
(I told him) “ people to themselves should say—
“ *He must have money, since he gives away.*—
“ And deem me of the greater consequence.”
Thus in the garrison when bread fail’d them,
What still remain’d—the Capitol’s defender
Threw to the Gauls; and by this stratagem
Made Brennus raise the siege. He thus preserved ⁽¹⁴⁾
The citadel to Rome without surrender,
And kept his credit up, tho nearly starved.

XCVIII. 74.

I frequently have heard it said by those
Who Galen and Hippocrates have studied,—
That there are days i'th' year, as they suppose,
When Patients must on no account be blooded.
Whether or not this really be the case—
Or Doctors think it—I have not concluded ;
Nor this appears to me to be a place
Where my opinion on should be obtruded.
I know my Three Groats' Dun, to make me pay,
Has no such scruples with respect to me,
Nor any of those rules observes ; for he,
So far from that, endeavours every day
To extract money from, which in some way
Has with the blood a near affinity.

XCIX. 75.

If an attack of fever I should feel—

I take Peru's specific, to restore.

If rheum affect me—tea renews my weal ;

Nor colds nor coughs distress me any more.

If with internal languor I be ill,

Or indigestion crude, I downwards pour

Aloes or myrrh—or gulp them in a pill,

Which virtue have to cleanse the stomach's floor.

I neither suffer hardness—crudities—

Intestine weakness—languor—nor decay:

But at my heart an ill still greater lies,—

Who lent—wants money from me ; while 'tis sure

That I have none : and this infirmity—

A College of Physicians cannot cure.

C. 76.

As one, that long imprisonment endured,
At length his fetters bursting—gets him clear,
The dungeon flies—where he had been immured,
And lonely wanders thro the forest drear ;
If midst the silent shades he sudden hear
The rustling leaf that slightest wind has stirr'd,
Alarm'd he stops his pace, in dreadful fear
Let him—he's been escaping from—he heard.
Thus I, that fled as best as I could get off
Afar from him who gave me constant dread,
Like prisoner fugitive I keep aloof ;
And pallid turn, and feel my fears rise high,
If but a voice I hear or footstep's tread,
Lest he of the Three Groats should there be nigh.

CL. 81.

About the Pole, stern winter raging round,
What time the days are shortest in the year,
'Tis said the frost so intercepts in air
The words you speak—that they produce no sound;
And, when the rugged season ends, more near
The downward sun doth melt and decompound
The liquid breath, which frost till then had bound,
That thawing words on every side you hear ⁽¹⁵⁾.
Oh Creditor! if thither, by some power,
In the cold season I could with thee be,—
I think that, when the nipping frost were o'er,
It would astonish them extremely there
To hear a voice—nor whom that utter'd see—
For the Three Groats demanding every where!

CII. 82.

Whoever to the light-diffusing rays
Unfolds his eyes, and breathes the vital air,—
Has never seen alone unclouded days,
Nor boasted full felicity whate'er.

The strokes of adverse fortune some must bear,
And dire calamity to mar their joys ;
Some in their breast a hopeless passion wear ;
And some a sordid love of gold employs.

From envy these must suffer—those from gall :
And in himself, or round him, every one
Must bear his share of ills—redeem'd to none.

But Heaven makes mine the hardest of all lots ;
Consigning me, here hostile more than all,
To an hard-hearted claimant of Three Groats !

CIII. 83.

The rapid rivers first shall backwards flow,
And sandy banks with flowrets blossom fair ;
The subtile flame shall first incline below ;
And fishes sail on pinions through the air ;⁽¹⁶⁾
First shall the horse—the ass—the bull—the cow—
To promenade upon the wave repair ;
And wisdom first his intellect endow
Who from his birth to idiocy was heir :
In short—whate'er's impossible I'll see ;
Before that owing money, I have not,
Oh Creditor ! shalt thou obtain from me.
But thou so pertinacious art, I wot,
That, tho impossible the thing should be,
Thou wouldst elicit the Three Groats from nought.

CIV. 84.

If Dædalus could to his sides unite
The buoyant wings whereon the skies he clave,
And with his son (who fell into the wave)
Could from his prison like a bird take flight ;
And, on the hippogriff, Astolfo hight
Could scale the sky and lunar track concave,
Whence for the Paladin he fetch'd and gave
Him back his brain, that love had turn'd outright :⁽¹⁷⁾
Why cannot I have means and power to flee,
Thro ways by which thou couldst not come to find me,
And get, Oh Creditor ! afar from thee ?
For I should like to see if then up there
The Devil would convey thee too behind me,
To dun me for thy old Three Groats in th' air ?

CV. 89.

The Traveller, that on foot unarm'd and lone
Pursues his way, no cause of danger knows—
Secure from harm—when money he has none ;
And, should he meet with Thieves, still singing goes.
For Thieves respect the Man, nor fall upon,
Who to his poverty protection owes,
Nor to the perils is exposed thereon
Which others are from depredating foes.
But thou, O Dun ! hast far a harder heart :
For—tho my empty pockets I may show,
Unbutton me, and let my braces go,—
Not only discontented—but, more stony
Thou and therewith the more tormenting art,
The more I swear to thee I have no money.

CVI. 90.

As was the golden apple, that, one day,
When robeless the three Goddesses he'd viewed,
Paris to beauteous Venus gave (they say)
Which Juno and Pallas with such rage imbued :
The fatal gift, that Asia fill'd with feud
And slaughter, and did Troy in ashes lay ;
Whence perish'd such a crowd, that, swell'd with blood,
Towards the sea roll'd Xanthus on its way :
Of such a kind perhaps the service is
My Dun did me ; tho the comparison
In truth (as people say) is somewhat lame.
Yet holds it good I think at least in this,—
That, having lent me once Three Groats, now on
Me cruel war he wages for the same.

CVII. 91.

I always for infallible will hold,
And none perhaps will say 'tis not the case,—
That Nature with partiality a fold
Of leather round his breast and brow did place,
Unmoved who can the aspect stern behold
Of one that him for money still doth chase,
And without fear or scruple can make bold
To tell his Creditor "NO" to his face.
Oh brazen brow! thou standest in good stead
And opportune to him who owes a score ;
As useful as a good harangue, and more :
Against all plaguy fellows, 'mong whom shines
The Three Groats' Dun conspicuous at their head,
Oh brazen brow! thou'rt worth Potosi's mines.

CVIII. 92.

The stupid shaver, that on Midas eyed
His ass's ears, when made thereof aware,
If to reveal the secret did not dare—
In vain to keep it from the world he tried :
Who went alone, and dug a hollow, where
He whisper'd more than once what he'd espied ;
Then closed the place with earth itself supplied,
And thought to bury his confessions there :
But lo—the reeds, that grew upon the spot,
Moved by the wind, spontaneously 'gan cry—
“ *Our King—our King an ass's ears has got !*”
Now, stocks and stones thus hearing thee apply,
I would not that they too should learn thereby
Like thou to dun me for thy Thrice a Groat.

CIX. 85.

The Smith his ponderous hammer lifts, and shakes
The air with frequently repeated blows
Upon the steel ; whence blade or helm he makes,
That shall one day withstand the stroke of foes :
So when by heat its form the metal takes,
The Warrior fearless to the battle goes,
If with that steel he gird himself ; nor quakes,
Because the temper of his arms he knows.
So too I imperturbably will bear
Her adverse strokes, tho Fortune—hostile to—
Should arm herself against me her worst to do :
For, my Three Groats' hard Dun, each greatest ill
Has harden'd me to suffer whatsoe'er,
By those annoyances he gives me still.

CX. 86.

The devious comet, that on high careers—
With sanguine splendour girt—athwart the night,
Ne'er gave the bigot crowd so much affright,
From dread of war—plague—famine—when it nears;
As oft it makes me palpitate with fears,
When unexpectedly upon my sight
The Dun, whose presence is to me the plight
And harbinger of future ill, appears.
For, if or not the comets planets be,
Their course is due ; so that one may by notes
Their presence here at any time foresee ;
But none can fix in an ephemeris
The appearance of him of the Triple Groats,
He comes so often—and irregular is.

CXI. 87.

I frequently revolve within my mind,
For consolation to my woes, that debt—
Altho perhaps not *necessary*—yet
May still be *useful* call'd to human kind :
And I reflect that Providence assign'd
To each his proper place, and—in his state—
Made one to another man subordinate,
Yet so that all should have their debts defin'd.
The difference here consists in this alone,
That some dissemble more—some less; that those
Keep their affairs conceal'd, and these disclose :
But this I swear—that, in my inmost thoughts
I'd mine conceal as close as any one,
If thou would'st plague me less for those Three Groats.

CXII. 88.

The nag, that ever has the spurs in 's sides,
And is accustom'd with their points to deal,
At length no longer minds whomever rides,
Howe'er he cross him with a weapon'd heel.
The laggard ox, whom—while the peasant guides—
All day he pricks with goad of sharpen'd steel,
Moves not the quicker, nor takes longer strides,
Tho in his back the puncture he should feel.
The scholar boy, that's whipt for every fault,
Loses at length his birch's dread of yore,
Nor can the master keep him from revolt.
I am that nag—that ox—and eke that boy:
Spur—goad—and birch, as lists my Dun to employ,
Henceforth he may: I care for them no more.

CXIII. 93.

My Creditor with me has often got
Such an agreeable and pleasant way,
Just as 'mong friends is practised every day,
As if the debt he thought no more about ;
And only asks if Frederic will or not
Deliver Prague, or in Bohemia stay ;⁽⁴⁾
If Hanover be taken by D'Etré ;
Or if from Brest the squadron have got out .
And, when h'has beat about the bush a while,
By little and little to the point he trots,
And says—“ *Well, when shall I have my Three Groats?*”
Thus sometimes, playing with a Mouse, ere nip,
The Cat will on her helpless victim smile,
Until at length she gives the fatal grip !

CXIV. 94.

The Mariner, who ploughs the distant sea,
To augment the wealth he has already won,
Brings hither from Macao silks and tea,
Or goes for salted fish to Cape Breton,—
If he should strike on rocks or shallows, he
To Heaven for his deliverance looks alone,
And vows—that when at home he safe shall be,
He'll give a *rotum* ⁽¹⁸⁾ for the favour done.
Oh gracious Heaven ! now too hear me : One day,
If I can also drive and from me chase
The man who persecutes me in this way,—
A solemn offering in the church I'll place ;
As one who fled in a most perilous case,
And from some dreadful danger got away.

CXV. 95.

In very antient times, imposed by might
On weak humanity, a law ⁽¹⁹⁾ prevailed ;
Which afterwards, as contrary to right,
Fell quite into disuse and was repealed,—
That if, to pay his debts, a wretched wight
(From getting into poverty) had failed,
The Creditor might wreak his cruel spite
Upon the debtor's body—unless bailed.
Perhaps for me that law is still in vigour ;
Since thou, my Dun ! dost plague me night and day,
Because I cannot those Three Groats repay :
But here perhaps thou'st reckon'd ill, o'er eager ;
For thou dost treat me with inhuman rigour,
And I don't liquidate my debt this way.

CXVI.⁽²⁰⁾ 96.

What sounds are these, nor that to Earth belong,
Which tuneful sweets thro ambient air convey?
The swan ne'er sang with such mellifluous tong';
The nightingale ne'er woke so sweet a lay;
Less sweetly erst, th' Elysian fields among,
To Pluto did the lyre of Orpheus play,
Who lull'd the triple-headed hound with song,
From hell to bear Eurydice away.
Perhaps (if that be actually the case,
Which Plato in his dreams supposed to be)
That concert in harmonic skies take place?
But be it what it may, those magic notes
Such rapture in me wake, that now, debt-free,
At length I've quite forgotten the Three Groats.

CXVII. 97.

The Pilgrim, who, 'mong woods has lost his way,
And plunged in depths whereout he can't get back,
If, sallying from the drear obscurity,
A robber lurking there should him attack ;
Or lamb, that, from the shepherd gone astray,
Far from the flock has wander'd off their track,
If, urged by hunger keen in search of prey,
The fierce and savage wolf should cross its walk ;
Or dove, what time the cowering hawk sh'has viewed,
Already sees him from on high come down
And stretch his talons out to seize upon ;—
Not so much dreads the fierce assault at hand,
As I with terror tremble when—pursued—
I see thee come the Three Groats to demand.

CXVIII. 98.

Chrysophilus, who, like a common lover,
Admires his girl and follows every where,
Always attempts with a Platonic air
Of purity to gloss his passion over ;
And dares to say he never did approve her
For earthly beauty, nor because she's fair,—
But for her mental charms, and virtues rare,
That__tho unseen—he in her can discover.
Now this same stoic virtue he would claim—
I cannot quite so readily allow him :
Better than any body else I know him ;
And know his visiting me in nought denotes
Affection for, but always has for aim
And primary end his never-done Three Groats.

CXIX. 99.

My dear Chrysophilus ! it is the case,
I know, that stoutly you maintain and say—
Platonic love exists (an idle phrase,
Which but egregious folly doth betray)
And that, if gifted with that special grace,
An amateur of female beauty may
Attach his eyes upon a pretty face,
Yet meanwhile turn his thoughts another way.
Now, my Chrysophilus ! if upon this
You'd wish to know what my idea may be,
I'll tell you most sincerely what it is,—
That your “*Platonic love*” within my thoughts
Appears as difficult a thing to me
As that I should return you those Three Groats.

CXX. 100.

An old ill-temper'd master's ways to bear,
And autumn chronic-rheumatism's twitch,
Their *Ba Be Bi Bo Bu* to children teach,
An ill-accepted benefit confer,
A snarling cur's *bow-wow*ing in one's ear,
The hissing of a boiling kettle's screech,
A crude disjointed dull long-winded speech
In your own virtues' eulogy to hear,
To ask—nor ever have one answered "*Yes*,"
On foot o'er sand to trudge a length of way,
To hear perpetually the same as now, —
Are all indeed severe annoyances;
But less intolerable, be what they may,
Than is a plaguy Creditor like thou.

CXXI. 101.

King Attalus's treasures I not want,
Where to he made the Roman people heir ;
Nor for the honours Cæsar reap'd I pant,
When he return'd—great Pompey's conqueror :
Nor, Heaven ! do I implore thou should'st me grant
Illimitable happiness whate'er ;
For—to be happy here is what man can't,
And—without bitter—sweet he tasted ne'er.
Nor riches—neither poverty give me ;
Give me a middle state : I've courage, too,
To bear adversity in due degree.
But he's a plague that nothing can compare with :
Then rid me of my Creditor, pray do !
I'm tired of him, and can no longer bear with.

CXXII. 102.

What ignorance and folly they betray,
Who follow Arnold—Geber⁽¹⁰⁾—and that set ;
And to transmuting metals think to get,
While secretly they labour night and day,
And sweat around a crucible, while they
Salt mercury and sulphurs 'malgamate,
Nor after all succeed to imitate
By art what Nature works in her own way !
Ah ! why don't we that wondrous art possess ?
Why may not Man with Nature vie, not less,
And copy those fair works she spreads around ?
For then, to get the Triple Groats' true ore,
I'd study chymic properties ; which found,
I'd break the pot, nor think about them more.

CXXIII. 103.

Just as a cauldron or a kettle does,
When standing on a blazing fire well-fed,—
If its contents boil up, by heat dispread,
No longer it can hold—but overflows :
For some time past till now, with similar throes,
Do the Three Groats go bubbling in my head
With such a foam, that poetry thence is bred,
Which thro the tongue exuberating goes.
And so the tiresome claims, wherewith till now,
Ne'er giving me a single day of pause,
My stingy Dun has plagued me—to allow,
May well be call'd the busy-blowing bellows,
Which keep alive the fancy's fire—and cause
The overflow poetical that follows.

CXXIV. 104.

Perhaps, when Mahomet ruled Arabia erst,
There importuning Creditors were none ;
As now there are by far too many a one,
Of whom my own is of the very worst :
As, 'mong the denunciations interspers'd
Amidst his Koran, an annoying Dun,
That night and day him worries—who's hard run
For money, is not mention'd to be curs'd.
Should any now to me do all the wrong,
That to one enemy another does
With all the worst malignity of foes,
I'd tell him thus—" There's one, still worrying me,
" Who's always at my heels : my Dun since long :
" May he likewise be a Creditor to thee !"

CXXV. 105.

Oh Heaven defend me ! what a frightful dream

I had last night, that me with terror shook :

Methought I'd cross'd the Styx ; and it did seem

The Infernal Judge his seat before me took ;

And, when he'd heard my sins, recounting them,

While on me frowning with an angry look,

(I tremble yet !) stern Minos, to condemn,

Thus his irrevocable sentence spook.—

“ Let him forthwith be taken down, and put,

“ For his so many heinous crimes, where he

“ Who enters once must ever more be shut :

“ And he, who living was his Dun—now dead,

“ Below shall his most fierce tormentor be,

“ And there shall stand him in the Furies' stead.”

CXXVI. 106.

I had a dream of such terrific hue,
That I awoke all trembling: and therefor
I'll turn me Ascetic straight, lest it come true;
Nor with the world have commerce any more:
And all my days henceforward I'll pursue
The austere virtues' practice; and deplore
The gone-by follies of my youth, and rue
My sins most bitterly and weep them o'er;
And, breathing penitence and sanctity,
I'll go bare-footed and with shaven crown,
Nor will I e'er be seen about the town:
And, if my plaguy Creditor should come
E'en there to seek me in the monast'ry,
I'll make the Porter tell him—" *Not at home.*"

CXXVII. 107.

One day (just to discuss the point herein,
Not to impeach its truth, I apprehend)
Chrysophilus in talk with me arraign'd
The immortality o' th' soul within :
And laid his greatest difficulty in—
That what has a beginning has an end :
But—" No." (said I) " There are things, I contend,
" That never finish when they once begin :
" And certainly there's nothing strange in that.
" Moreo'er, Chrysophilus ! a bet I'll lay
" That in thyself I'll find an instance pat :
" Perhaps thou didst not once the Three Groats' debt
" Begin to ask me for ; which goes on yet,
" And is not like to finish—till I pay?"

CXXVIII.⁽²¹⁾ 108.

The tong' of *Oc*—so call'd unto this day,
And that of *Oui*, were those in which of yore
Gawen and Arthur's names in many a lay
Were famed by Bards who that distinction bore.
Th' Illyrian tongue of *Ya* is heard o'er more
From Adria to the Alps along that way.
From Var and down the hills to Ocean's shore
Extends the beauteous land where *Si* is *Yea*.
Thus the affirming particle, we see,
Imparts the name to every vulgar tong'.
This Country so the land of *Yes* should be :
But mine has now been used to answer so
The Creditor of the Three Groats so long,
That I may call my tong' the tong' of NO.

CXXIX. 109.

The prudent chief, both art and force who tries,
A city—fort—or castle to reduce,
When all that he can do is of no use,
To turn his arms elsewhere himself applies.
And he, that in remoter times, likewise,
Corinthus' Isthmus⁽²²⁾ vainly tried to sluice,
When he discern'd he should his labour lose,
Abandon'd th' injudicious enterprize.
'Tis thou alone, Oh Dun ! wilt still persist
In what's impossible, tho all in vain
Thy toil has been till now and ends have miss'd ;
And o'er and o'er—a hundred times a day,
Tho from me thou canst never aught obtain,
Perverse dost ask me the Three Groats to pay.

CXXX. 110.

In Phrygia erst there was a King, they say,
 (I tell it thee as I myself was told)
 Who gave a kind reception to the old
 Silenus, when one time he'd lost his way ;
Whom Bacchus, for the favour to repay,
 Permitted in his touch the power to hold—
 That every thing were instant turn'd to gold
 On which he at any time his hand should lay.
For me—I do not want, to make me rich,
 To have that gold-transforming attribute :
 Away be from me such a sordid itch !—
But wish that thou (so a superfluous store
 Thou mightst possess) couldst all to gold transmute ;
 To worry me for the Three Groats no more.

CXXXI. 111.

Thou say'st that no one hitherto has found
The Circle's Quadrature—nor ever will :
And, my Chrysophilus ! it must be own'd,
And—I confess—'tis undiscover'd still :
For, altho some reduce it to a bound
Of squares—triangles—and what not—to fill,
Yet its extremities of curve around
They cannot measure with unerring skill.
But, tho no demonstration has till now
Been given to make the Quadrature appear,
Perhaps some person yet will show us how ;
For as 'tis there—there 'tis : But so they'll not
(Which, on the other hand, is nought less clear)
Find out Three Groats on me—⁽²³⁾ if I've not got.

CXXXII. 112.

My Creditor upon me came one day,
Demanding his Three Groats' unsettled score ;
And like a post he stuck himself before,
As if—inseparable from—to stay ;
And if I budged an inch, behind he lay,
And followed like my shadow. Where, once more,
Oh ! where's the horn ⁽²⁴⁾ Astolfo had of yore,
That drove both men and women far away ?
Had I an instrument of such a power,
I'd blow as loud as ever I could blow,
Till he should go to pot—and even lower :
But Fate, that arms itself to work me woe,
Perhaps would make him deaf thereto—nor cower
At that dread sound which frighten'd others so.

CXXXIII. 113.

Oh labour lost ! vain foolishness of man !

For, what avails it me that I peruse

The authors of the classic age, or chuse

Both Maro's works and Tullius's to scan ?—

Or speculate on Nature's hidden plan,

Inquire in motion's undiscover'd laws,

Of ocean's ebb and flow explore the cause,

And how attract the steel the magnet can ?

What folly—in cold or heat—by night and day—

O'er musty volumes to grow pale and pore,

The sciences to learn and knowledge get !

Since, Creditor ! it ne'er was possible yet

To get Three paltry Groats ; and—got', to pay,

Give them to thee and hear about no more.

CXXXIV. 114.

Chrysophilus engages in a day

Or two to learn speak French off-hand and free ;

He knows quite well already what is "*Oui* ;"

And, on occasion, he "*Non pas*" can say.

Now what he thinks to bring about this way

Is not made public, nor can all foresee ;

Perhaps it rests exclusively with me

To guess the motive of this new essay :

Perceiving that he can't obtain his ends ;

Nor any how his money from me get,

However he have ask'd me for as yet,—

He deems that language may possess, to wrench

Cash from one, greater power ; therefor intends

To worry me for the Three Groats in French.

CXXXV. 115.

Thou think'st that I am angry with thee now,
Who love thee, Creditor ! and wish thee well,
And would thou wert a Duke or King, and thou
Hadst as much gold as ever thou couldst tell :
For, generous then, thou'dst say to me, I trow,—
“ Henceforth I do not want your money : quell
“ Your fears ; for on you freely I bestow
“ The due Three Groats ; therewith your treasures swell.”
But still I've cause to fear—and do opine
Thou would'st continue to torment me thus,
E'en tho the gold of all Peru were thine :
For, who has money still wants more supplied :
And there's an antient adage teaches us
That “ Covetous men are never satisfied.”

CXXXVI. 117.

Now stomach up, now with his mouth turn'd down,
The suffering Invalid distracted writhes
With pain and heat ; and, restless as he lies,
Nor sleep nor ease can get—to him unknown :
But then should the Physician call upon,
And write a *Recipe* to give him ease —
That virtue has to cure of his disease,
The convalescent Man gets well anon.
But that complaint, which I within me feel,
Has work'd into my bones in such a way,
That 'tis not possible to cure or heal ;
So, when my Dun calls on me, to converse,
The oftener he his visits comes to pay—
The more my ill increases and gets worse.

CXXXVII. 118.

According to the various properties

O' th' blood and juices Nature pour'd in us,

May be that the diversity all lies

In manners and in modes of acting: thus—

The vigour of the spirits qualifies

Complexions of a choleric impetus;

And seriousness, and torpid tendencies,

A dull phlegmatic habit langorous.

Thus hatred, love, and covetousness have birth;

And every action, to whose end were formed

Those organs Nature in us all puts forth.

Therefor, my Dun! I think that in this way

Thy importunity was in thee germed;

Whence ask'st for the Three Groats so unceasingly.

CXXXVIII. 119.

Perish the man among us first, I say,
Inexorable poverty who brought !
Thro her—unmingled pleasure never may,
Thro her—ne'er full felicity be got.
'Twas she that first to write—“ *I promise to pay*”—
The needy man, who has no money, taught ;
Who, when he can't discharge it on the day,
In jail his liberty must lose, if caught.
This cruel pest also for me begets
A fruitful source of ills of every hue,
When it occasions my contracting debts.
My only comfort is to ponder this on —
My Creditor can harass me, 'tis true;
But —for Three Groats one can't be sent to prison.

CXXXIX. 120.

What thinkest on, my Dun ! that thus unnerved
Mournful and mute dost stand, with serious air ;
As one that some fail'd-often-in affair
Within his mind revolves when unobserved ?
So absent are thy thoughts and much disturbed,
This way and that thy haggard eyes do glare,
Proclaiming on thy brow thy bosom's care,
Which seems as if it all thy soul absorbed.
Thou think'st, perhaps, that as to no effect
Till now hast ask'd for the Three Groats—to obtain,
Against me some new weapons wilt direct ?
But, on that scheme to ponder's of no use :
If all has hitherto been done in vain,
The future can no better luck produce.

CXL. 121.

My Creditor does not those weapons wear,
Enëas or Achilles erst did wield,
By which, with so much slaughter far and near,
One Italy—the other Phrygia fill'd ;
Nor those with which more lately there and here
Orlando ⁽¹⁷⁾ strew'd the soil with foes he'd kill'd ;
But me with importunities severe,
And savage methods arm'd, he has assail'd ;
And unexpectedly will at me throw
The mortal summons his Three Groats to pay :
I ward the stroke, and hurl at him a “ NO.”
Continues now, and fiercer grows the fight :
But—turning tail—I quickly scud away,
And victor I remain alone by flight.

CXLI. 116.

The tennis ball, that 'gainst the wall is thrown,
And___striking there___'s indented somewhat flat,
Cannot retain that form___I know not what___
Caused by the violent impression on :

For, by its elasticity, anon
It reassumes the shape it lost by that ;
And, in a new direction turn'd thereat,
Rebounds___him who projected it___upon.

In such a way the malice and ill-will,
Which thou for the Three Groats dost on me vent,
Finding in me a greater hardness still,
Thrown backwards by a "NO," reflects to thee ;
And thus, by a re-acting power, whence sent ___
Bears back the blow projected against me.

CXLII. 122.

What time—his first—the unpractised Sailor hears
The dreadful howling of the stormy gale,
And views the wave—on high its crest that rears,
With failing heart and voice he turns him pale :
But when at sea grown-up, in older years,
He sings in concert to the furious squall ;
And, seated on the stern, devoid of fears,
Beholds the horrid darkness round him fall.
In such a way I felt a terror strong,
When my tormenting Creditor 'gan erst
To strike up his Three Groats' perpetual song :
But, since my ear's accusom'd to the stave,
Amusement now—if dread it gave me at first,
And I go singing to his noisy wave.

CXLIII. 123.

Among the old philosophers Greece had,
There were some certain sages (so they say)
Who boasted equal firmness to display
In every kind of fortune—good or bad;
And, with such stoicalness arm'd and clad,
They vaunted they would not in any way
The greater pleasure—grief—nor fear betray,
Tho the whole world should tumble down like mad.
Now, just to prove their bragg'd indifference,
I would have put them to the test awhile
In my own way, which ne'er ran in their thoughts:
And, if they had within them life or sense,
They'd ne'er have taken things in that cool style
With this my Creditor of the Three Groats.

CXLIV. 124.

I've often heard it said of Cicero—

His powers of oratory were so strong,

And that he had so eloquent a tong',

He never paid his debts—however so :

When any summons'd him for debt, he'd go

Up in the rostrum, and hold forth so long,

Entangling so the case with right and wrong,

That he ne'er paid, whatever he might owe.

Oh dearest Cicero ! how happy thou !

Thy Creditors outwitting by this plan :

Rare gift wherewith the Gods did thee endow !

Thou wast not such a ninny of a man

As I, that gabble—gabble on, but can

The Three Groats' debt not puzzle any how.

CXLV. 125.

Silent within the caverns deep and dark
Of that Sicilian mountain, in whose womb
Enceladus erst found a living tomb,
Bitumina and sulphurs latent lurk :
But, if ignited by that secret spark,
So many have sought to find—but none of whom
Have found, it vomits flames therefrom,
And masses huge throws up of wondrous work.
Thus, for a length of time, within my brain
A shapeless body of poetic matter,
Without exuding thence, had torpid lain :
But, from when the Three Groats 'gan there for birth
To struggle and ferment, with fearful clatter
Poetical eruptions have burst forth.

CXLVI. 126.

Perhaps thou canst not live without me, heh?
Perhaps I've some magnetic virtue, so
That thou must follow me where'er I go;
And from thee then I cannot get away?
But I'll go hide myself some where, and stay,
Where thou not possibly should'st come also,—
Some place conceal'd from every eye, where no
One human creature's foot did ever stray;
And see if even in that solitude
Thou'lt find me out, nor I can any where
Thy teasing importunities elude:
And then I'll think thee like the hound, just as
The track he follows of the flying hare,
And winds her scent wherever she may pass.

CXLVII. 127.

Happy the Merchant, who, in any place
Where he's in debt, is not obliged to stay;
But loads his ship, and goes, as list he may,
To sell his goods where such is not the case !
For then his Creditor's provoking face
Is not always before him every day ;
Nor can his Dun torment him, in the way
That mine does me, without a moment's grace.
For not alone to China or Peru,
As goes the Merchant, I can neither go,—
But we must dwell together here the two :
So that, where'er I am, between my Dun
And me there's but ten yards perhaps or so:
Then how the devil can I him ever shun !

CXLVIII. 128.

A certain lover of the antique one day
Took me the Campidoglio⁽²⁵⁾ to explore :
There statues I beheld, that lined the way,
On which had learned chisels toil'd of yore :
The monstrous Deities did I survey,
The gross Egyptian people wont adore ;
And wounded Gladiator too, that lay
Half fallen and half not ; with many more.
A statue then I saw, extremely like
To him I've always hated for his credit,
Which with an inward terror did me strike ;
Then, like a thief that flies the Sheriff's men,
Down stairs I ran as quick as I could tread it :
And while I live I'll ne'er go there again !

CXLIX. 129.

It never was a good man's act to do—

To want get money out of him wh' has none :

It is against true charity, and one

'Gainst every other Christian virtue too.

But let's discuss the point : All this ado,

And importunity of thine hereon,

Perhaps will rather make me vow anon

Never to pay thee—more than hitherto.

Indeed, to say the truth, I intended yet,

That by this means no one should know thereof,—

Within a day or two to pay it off:

But now 'tis otherwise ; for, if I do it—

Or not, 'tis all the same : all know my debt :

So I've no longer any motive to it.

CL. 130.

While in such gloomy colours I display
My Creditor, all readers__without doubt__
That he's a miserable wretch will say,
Who cannot those Three Groats exist without.
Yet in toupée and ruffles he goes out,
And wears his crimson mantle every day, ⁽²⁶⁾
And in his splendid mansion all about
Has costly furniture in grand array.
But while I still him his Three Groats refuse,
Whether by night or day he cannot rest,
Nor values aught whereof he is possess'd.
If his demands then I object to grant,
Pray__who shall of injustice me accuse,
Since they proceed from wilfulness__not want?

CLI. 131.

Let Fortune arm herself to work me wo,
And all her utmost rage against me stir,—
In me no more her anger wakes a fear,
Nor me is longer formidable to :
My Creditor of the Three Groats has so
Accustom'd me his cruel wrongs to bear,
That I with patience can endure from her
The greatest ills and worst that she can do.
And my ill, by all these many woes produced,
Has been of use to me at last—tho late :
For—oft times good may be from ill deduced.
Nor aught will I e'er fear from hostile Fate ;
Since still I sing, amidst my woes elate,
And sport thus with my sorrows, to them used.

CLII. 132.

With brow of deepest gloom, and awful tone,
 “*Come!*” said my Destiny to me one day:
While liberty of choice she left me none—
Whether to answer her with *yea* or *nay*.
Like one that’s blind I followed her; or one
 That must his executioner obey—
Who binds his hands and hoodwinks, that alone
He cannot find the middle of the way.
Thro hurricanes and whirlwinds me she led!
How tell what dreadful fears my heart alarmed,
While tripp’d my feet and giddy turn’d my head
But, from a thousand dangers when to shun
She’d drawn me, gave me up at length unharmed
Into the hands of a Three Groats’ hard Dun.

CLIII. 133.

If I go where, with hurdle stake or net,
The Shepherd for his flock a pen has made,
And see the furious dog—nor can evade—
Come running up with foaming jaws sharp set,—
I look if stick or stone be near, to get,
And with such arms in hand I'm nought afraid ;
Or search my pocket for, and give him bread ;
When, pacified, he licks my feet like pet.
With thee, however, that cannot be done :
For thou didst never listen to a prayer ;
Nor boldest face e'er frighten'd thee, I'll swear.
A harder heart than thine was ne'er till now
Or seen or known, nor more unyielding one,
Since even a dog's more tractable than thou.

CLIV. 134.

These maxims hear, I give thee, to direct :

When we do good, my Brother ! with our store,

We neither should remember it nor score ;

Else praise nor merit can it then reflect.

The proverb says, which well I recollect,—

“ Do good : but then about it think no more :

“ At length one day, tho it be late before,

“ ’Twill profit you when you the least expect.”

Thus others do : But thou dost not do thus ;

That, having once advanced me Three Groats’ loan,

Dost night and day torment me for them still.

Thy favour did me some small good, I own :

But there’s no end to thy annoying fuss :

So such a good’s no better than an ill.

CLV. 135.

A Proclamation's issued, it appears,
Prohibiting expressly—from this date—
All *Eagles Sessinis* and French *Deniers* ⁽²⁷⁾
From longer passing current as of late.
Both thou and I are most unfortunate !
I'd got all ready for thee my arrears—
An hundred and fifty Doits : but, luckless fate !
They're *Eagles* every one—all rank Mounseers.
What's to be done ? I have no other money :
Nor will I violate the Proclamation,
Nor put forbidden coin in circulation
I'll put them in deposit, until when
(Which method will I take—as best of any)
That coin shall come in currency again.

CLVI. 136.

Chrysophilus, his other parts among,
Such a phlegmatic temper has, so slow
A man there never was; and, right or wrong,
He never can determine—*Yes* or *No* :
Whene'er you tell him—"Why d' you loiter so ?
"Get your work done, and don't stick there so long."—
What others would have finish'd hours ago,
He will to more than half a day prolong.
By some fatality—I know not what,
He'll only change this dilatory way
To an extreme solicitude with me ;
For, when he asks me his Three Groats, with that
He shakes his sluggish nature off, nor may
A much more expeditious Man there be.

CLVII. 137.

The ternary number always seems, if scann'd,
To have some meaning of a mystic one.—
Whatever act or rite *three* times be done,
For solemn and completed then doth stand.
The Fates, and Furies, were a *triple* band ;
And Graces. Cerberus had *three* mouths his own.
Apollo's *tripod* was of great renown.
And Neptune's *trident* arm'd his dexter hand.
This same mysterious **3**, e'er since the day
My Threefold Groats' dire debt has made me grieve,
Amidst a thousand sorrows in this way,
Contains for me a certain power malefic,
That of all kinds of ills, I do believe,
Has been for me a fatal hieroglyphic.

CLVIII. 138.

No Warrior brave is he, tho bearing arms,
Who is not foremost to assail his foes :
But well a Soldier's duty he performs,
To others who a bold example shows.
The sacred Priest, to piety who warms
The breast, and who expounds Religion's laws,
Whose precept to his practice not conforms,
Howe'er he preach—thereto but little draws.
Then, while thou dost not pay thy share of debt,
Why art thou so importunate with one
Who is thy debtor ; nor wilt e'er have done ?
Nor canst thou therefor lay the blame on me :
I'll follow the example thou dost set ;
First pay thy Creditors—then I'll pay thee.

CLIX. 139.

Thou'rt in a passion with me, and would'st know
Why those Three Groats I don't repay thee duly.—
Now listen, Creditor ! what is most truly
My strongest plea—I have none to bestow :
Nor any can exception make nor show
To this good reason, that avails me fully ;
Tho even he should come among us newly
Who made the digest—and the code also.
Nor will I, for thy sake, do aught that can
Be deem'd unworthy of an honest Man,
Or clash in any way with what is fair.
For—justice, equity, and the laws each one,
Protect a Debitor 'gainst whomsoe'er
Who'd squeeze out money from him—when h' has none.

CLX. 140.

So—thou'lt not sue me the Three Groats to pay,
Lest I should plead them lent too long ago ;
Or else to prove me knavish in some way,
Or with some other motive I can't know ?
But I have no intention of doing so :
Moreover such a trifle to defray,
As is what I unfortunately owe,
Shall ne'er a fraudulent debtor me display.
Besides, the principal point does not consist
In my admission ; nor till now have I
Denied the debt (which does in fact exist)
Nor ever will deny it : there it is.
But I deny t' have cash : the difficulty,
Oh my Chrysophilus ! consists in this.

CLXI. 141.

A man, who always doth with patience hear,
Shall oft tire out another's tongue in's head.
But, my Chrysophilus ! it can't be said
That__us between__things e'er did so appear :
Thou hitherto hast not worn out mine ear ;
For to the present day I've not yet paid :
Yet thy eternal tongue has never stay'd
From asking, and still runs its old career.
The point yet moot remains : and, were it tried
By any one, to settle whether thou
Or I have been the conqueror in the bout,—
I think he would be puzzled to decide
Which of us has th' advantage had till now ;
But still must let the question lie in doubt.

CLXII. 142.

But I, by reason of the fact, do say

I have the advantage of thee: thou alone,

Oh Creditor! a claim of *right* canst lay;

Whilst I am in *possession* of the bone.

Now, if his case, who's in possession, may

Be always held the best—o'ertopp'd by none,

While I do not thy due Three Groats repay—

My case will always be the better one.

If hitherto I've had the best of it,

I will that superiority maintain;

Nor let one day be said—while I admit—

That, seeing finally resistance vain

To thy importunities, compell'd to quit—

I gave the contest up—and thou didst gain.

CLXIII. 143.

Chrysophilus ! what 'vails it, night and day,
Thou for thy cash persisting me to bore—
I sturdily refusing to restore,
To war against each other in this way ?
Then let's make peace : the *status quo* of yore
We'll for the basis of agreement lay :
The terms shall be—I never to repay,
Thou ne'er for thy Three Groats to ask me more.
But—vain the hope ! I know how that would be :
As well expect a Shylock to forget,
As want oblivion of a loan from thee !—
The first time that by accident we'd met,
In asking for the news, or some such plea,
Thou'dst break the treaty and demand thy debt.

* * Substituted for the Original. See "Sketch etc." : p. xxvi.

CLXIV. 163.

I kept some antient coin in a bureau
For thee, my Creditor ! to pay thy score :
I'd found it under ground ; a coin of yore
That in the Consuls' time at Rome did go :
They are *Sesterces minor*, ⁽²⁸⁾ thus also
Two *Asses* and a half, and worth therefor
Five Farthings each—perhaps say six—not o'er ;
Their value may be estimated so.
In these Sesterces thee I'd meant to pay :
When, hearing some disputing on the amount,
I found it difficult therein to give
Thee thy Three Groats, exactly to defray :
So let the debt stand over : for I wo'nt
Give more nor less than thou should'st just receive.

CLXV. 165.

I assure thee, Creditor ! so do believe,—
That, had I had them on a former day,
A point I'd made it thy Three Groats to pay.
But what ! who e'er—what they have not—can give ?
That, which I have, thou from me shalt receive ;
And round thy brows my Muse shall twine a bay
In fadeless wreath of laudatory lay,
Whence shall thy name to future ages live.
Thou may'st observe how good my intention is,
Because I give thee all I have to spare ;
I can but give thee SONNETS,—here they are.
But thou wilt not receive thy money back
This fashion, nor be paid in coin like this :
Rolling thine eyes, thou seem'st to say “ *Oh lack!*”

CLXVI. 166.

There's now no longer a hope—howe'er so faint—

To rid me of the cruel plagues and woes

My Dun inflicts upon ; e'en, when he goes,

Tho he should go where his Grandfather went :

For, some days since, he made his testament ;

Wherein he this condition doth impose

Upon his heir—“ *Th' inheritance to lose,*

“ *Unless he dun me for the money lent.*”

Now when was ever equal malice heard,—

If that fell act, which plagues me night and day,

Must from himself be to his heirs transferr'd ?

Not even Death can terminate nor kill

My woes, if my hard Creditor this way—

Alive or dead—must persecute me still !

CLXVII. 167.

Do not be wroth, if, on thy beauteous face,
That pierced me, Nisa ! with a shaft so soft,
I now no longer come to gaze so oft
As I was wont some months ago to gaze :
A Creditor so plagues me—nigh to craze,
That every other care my bosom left
The day I got in debt ; and, thence bereft,
No longer Love holds in my heart a place.
Believe it, Nisa ! trust me when I say—
That Love and Debt can ne'er companions be :
Whence I think more about my Dun than thee.
Directly I made that debt Love turn'd about :
For those Three Groats I quite forgot Love's sway :
And thus one Demon drove the other out.

CLXVIII. 168.

My Nisa ! ne'er reproach me on that score,
Nor be incens'd with, for unfaithfulness ;
My heart is still the same as heretofore,
Nor is thy beauty otherwise nor less :
But were it even she, in days of yore
Who caused the fall of Troy,—I do profess
I could not bend my mind upon thee more,
Nor less unseldom than I now address.
But wilt thou, Nisa ! that, as wont with me,
To thee anew I turn my heart and thoughts,—
Supply me with ('tis no great sum) Three Groats.
Nor deem it strange : thou of the present day
The first fair lady surely would'st not be,
Who kept herself a lover in this way.

CLXIX. 169.

That bear's cub, Nisa ! which the other day
My Lesbin found within its den, so tame
Already is become and full of game,
As often freely with the dog to play:
Alconius fancied it, and___for his flame
Nerina___ask'd it me ; for which to pay,
He offer'd me the finest cup that may
Be seen, if I would let him have the same.
But, let him keep his cup : alone for thee,
I, Nisa ! keep my gift ; and thou alone___
Had I a realm___should'st have a realm from me.
The gift I know 's unworthy of thy thoughts :
And I'd a greater give : but what can one
Who has not wherewithal to pay Three Groats !

CLXX. 170.

Seven times hath now the sun left Ganges' shore,
And him as oft immersed in Ocean depths,
While I in vain pursue my Nisa's steps,
Whether at day's beginning or when o'er.
No more the woods—she roams the fields no more;
Nor longer from the limpid fountain sips,
Where oft she wont to bathe her rosy lips,
What time the noon-day beams intensely pour.
Must then, my Nisa! while I track thy way,
Thou, like the stag when by the dogs pursued,
With rapid flight thus still my chase elude?
While, by a strange fatality, my Dun,
If I attempt to fly him, night or day,
Still follows me whichever way I run!

CLXXI. 171.

If e'er beside the river's verdant marge,
Or seated 'neath the leafy oak, if e'er
With thee, my beauteous Nisa ! I enlarge
On that sweet shaft which in my heart I bear ;
And, trembling while 'tween doubtful hope and fear,
To end my tedious woes my suit I urge ;
My amorous complaint thou wilt not hear,
Nor let me from the Triple Groats diverge.
Ah ! why deceive myself ? who cannot see
My love has to thee always hateful been—
My sorrows only pleasure give to thee ?
Thou cruel Fair ! I cannot say here how
Which grieves me most, my love and debt between,
If most my Creditor afflict me or thou !

CLXXII. 172.

Behold that knot of flowers, so fresh and fair

At early morn ! full soon must they decay :

Such, scornful Nisa ! is thy beauty, rare

And blooming now, tho doom'd to fade one day.

Lo—how the breeze, here wafted from the bay,

Doth shake those flow'rs, and bend—now here—now there

Inconstant Nisa ! thus thy heart doth stray,

From one love to another changing e'er.

Go, pluck them ; and thy locks No, let them slink

At foot those heaps obscene : now some one throws

A stone at them—and now another goes :

Now see how they do shrivel up and shrink,

And, like the Three Groats' Creditor, they sink

Beneath heap'd up indignities and “*NO*”es.

CLXXIII. 173.

My Nisa's image erst was wont to be
So present to my thoughts, that I could trace
Her golden hair—neat foot—and lovely face
Therein, and all her wondrous beauty see.
When, O my Dun ! some time ago, in me
The strangest metamorphosis took place ;
And, by an odd fatality of case,
My Nisa all at once was changed to thee !—
And where had been a length of time engraved
Her image that had charm'd me and enslaved,
Lo—what a precious figure ! enter'd thou.
'Twas thus on Argos' plains, when from them banished,
Upon the sudden presence of a cow,
That Inachus's lovely daughter vanished.

CLXXIV. 174.

The secret love, conceal'd within my heart,
Thus inwardly doth often prompt my strains—
“ Ah ! sing of her, whose each bewitching art
“ And peerless beauty made thee wear her chains
“ Sing those bright eyes, whence issued forth the dart,
“ Which—planted in thy breast—still there remains
“ And that soft tongue, which did the flame impart,
“ Whose fervent glow thy bosom still retains.”
When I, who never can oppose its will,
Address me to the lofty task ; yet, thus,
Within myself the doubtful point discuss,—
“ Now, if I find the fair-one take no pity
“ On my complaint of sorrows, cruel still,
“ ’Twill turn to sing the Triple Groats’ old ditty.”

CLXXV. 175.

E'er since thy beauteous image in my heart
By Love's own hand was graven, until now,
Heaven truly knows, my sweetest Nisa ! how
I always long to be where'er thou art.
But there's thy Cousin watches thy resort,
Like Argos watching Io turn'd to a cow ;
And most ferociously doth knit his brow,
When he sees any body pay thee court :
And, jealous as a Man can ever be,
He will not let me nigh thee—from me kept :
So with him I no intercourse will have.
Nisa ! that Cousin of thine has given me
Such a dislike, no other one—except
The Creditor of the Three Groats—e'er gave.

CLXXVI. 176.

Adorning when her hair with flowers among,
And in her crimson gown attired, whose bloom
Makes her appear so charming—if along
With other Nymphs my Nisa goes to roam,—
While, such rare beauty—firing—seals my doom,
With full delight on her I gazing hang,
The shafts of Love I've no protection from—
Of Love—that gives my heart so sweet a pang.
Yet, since my Nisa vanish'd from my sight,
Like something that in former times might be,
All thoughts of her have likewise taken flight :
But when I see him of the Three Groats' score,
My heart doth quake ; and when no more I see,
He leaves his image present there before.

CLXXVII. 177.

If ever, Nisa ! I regain the same
Tranquillity of heart my lot once gave,—
If ever freed from debt, that chills my flame,
And doth me now with bitter sorrow grieve,
I'll make Parnassus ring with thy sweet name,
Not less than Pindus ; and a wreath I'll weave
Of praise immortal to thy beauty's fame :
And Nisa too her Poet then shall have.
But, too severe the sorrows are, that thus
By day and night still on my quiet prey,
And that my heart with mournful sadness fill ;
Nor can I wake appropriate numbers, till
The persecution those Three Groats to pay
Give over to torment me as it does.

CLXXVIII. 178.

I saw it lighten several times at noon ;
And then a violent wind got up,—the weather
Betoken'd rain, the sky grew dark, and soon
The thunder 'gan to make a dreadful pother.
An lov'st me, Nisa ! soon as dusk come on,
Eurilla call ; with Elpin will I hither,
What time I shall have penn'd the flock anon ;
And thus in chat we'll spend the night together :
Eurilla with her Elpin shall converse ;
While I, my Nisa ! will with thee rehearse :
And let it rain and thunder as it may ;
For I should hope that, while so bad it is,
The Three Groats' claimant, worrying me to pay,
Will not pursue me such a night as this.

CLXXIX. 179.

Rise, Elpin ! quit thy pillow : for, behold—
Already day in Orient lucid shows ;
The flock already quits the open'd fold,
And on the dewy blade to pasture goes.
I' th' neighbouring grove a fête to day they hold :
The Shepherd-throng already thither flows ;
There rural Pan in song shall be extoll'd ;
And there will they relate their amorous woes.
Up, Elpin ! rise, and take thy lute : I know
That thine the chieftest meed of song will be ;
And that no Bard's can rival with thy lay.
There, an it please thee, we'll together go :
And on my pipes I also will for me
On the Three Groats some little matter say.

CLXXX. 180.

Must I then still behold each lad—each lass—
Of merriment and sweet enjoyment full,
While, wrapt in melancholy thoughts and dull,
Am doom'd my fresh and youthful days to pass?—
And, brooding o'er my woes that still amass,
On gloomy cares must I still feed my soul?
Must adverse Fortune still my fate controul?
For me must Heaven be always dark? Alas!
And must the cruel plague, that hitherto
Has fill'd my heart with grief, go where I may,
Still persevere to vex me, as 'twould do?
Oh rigid Fate! for once relent; and let
Me breathe in peace releas'd one single day
From all remembrance of the Three Groats' debt.

CLXXXI. 181.

Fair Nisa ! now I'm near thee, to review
And gaze on that sweet face that charms me aye ;
The grief, that still tormented me anew,
Has wholly left my heart and gone away.
I'll rid me now of every care ; and now
I'll sing thee that same song I sung one day
To Amaryllis, when herself my brow
With wreaths adorn'd, so much she liked the lay.
And Lesbin ! give me thou that cup ; I'll down
The liquor pour, that shall my spirits arm
With strength and courage high 'gainst Fortune's frown.
Oh generous wine ! thou art a deadly weapon
(While with full joy thou dost my bosom warm)
Against my Dun of the Three Groats to clap on.

CLXXXII. 182.

Great Bacchus ! what delights thy fountains pour !

Thou dost man's real happiness contain.

On all their past adversity and pain,

Alone thro thee the wretched think no more.

Thou fill'st the blood with warmth unfelt before ;

The weight of age thou teachest to sustain ;

And, shaking growing coldness off again,

The genial glow of youth thou dost restore.

Now from thy veins would'st thou supply my own,

In thee, O mighty Bacchus ! 'neath thy sway,

My every care and gloomy thought I'd drown :

Would'st thou in me transfuse thy rage divine,

With gladsome heart I'd skip and dance away

Before that Three Groats' Creditor of mine.

CLXXXIII. 183.

What means within me this unwonted glow,
That sweetly wraps me from myself away?
What fire all up and down my veins doth flow?
“Hip! hip! hip! Bacchus for ever! hurrah!”
But ah! who’s this that comes towards me now?—
Whoe’er thou art, keep off! begone! I say:
Alas! now I know thee: aye—my Dun art thou—
Thou’rt he who wants me the Three Groats to pay.
Oh Liber! give me a while that thyrsus, which
Him, who did thy divinity deride,
On Rhodope’s high crags did whilom switch.
The Dun shall here thy victim fall thro me!—
A memorable warning to abide
For all who plague their Debtors as does he.

CLXXXIV. 184.

Hark, Osmin ! quick as e'er you can, forthwith,
Go pluck the bitter wormwood's leaf ; and take
The bristled holly, thistle from the heath,
And prickly thorn ; whereof a bundle make :
Add thereunto the beet from ground beneath,
And slimy mallows also, if you reck ;
Then bring them me : I want to make a wreath,
Wherewith a most unworthy head to deck.
But, to Pan's temple first the Fauns invite ;
And Satyrs with the cloven foot there cite ;
Charging them all to come by dawn of day :
While to the ceremony then I'll bring
The Three Groats' Creditor—who'd have me pay,
And there of plaguy fellows crown him King.

CLXXXV. 185.

This is the fatal spot, Sir ! where one day
Chrysophilus lent me Three Groats : 'twas there
He drew his purse ; and, opening it, with care,
Told out the money, warning to repay.
It wa'n't a step beyond the place, or ere
He 'gan already asking me to pay ;
And from that time, tormenting me this way,
The stingy Dun has followed every where.
The spot is baleful, Sir ! and we must purge :
With logs of wood hewn by the moon's cold rays
Now make a magic fire, and round its verge
Keep turning barefoot : twice and thrice then cry
(With lustral water sprinkling o'er the blaze)
“ Get out of this—hence, evil Spirit, fly ! ”

CLXXXVI. 186.

Lo—where the boatman to the water side
Approaches with his skiff: now freely go,
My Nisa ! take a pleasant sail, or row,
Upon the tranquil bosom of the tide.
Cymodoce, who roams the ocean wide,
With hair in corals twined herself shall show ;
And that bright goddess,⁽²⁹⁾ Hercules loved so,
For spiteful envy in the wave shall hide.
If Glaucus—Proteus—Palæmon—on thee
Their wanton looks attach, I don't conceal
That jealousy and anger I shall feel :
But, unless an amphibious beast he be,
At least shalt thou not have, as I have still,
The Three Groats' Grand Tormentor about thee.

CLXXXVII. 187.

Blows Aquilo, the atmosphere now chills,
And sidelong now the Sun inclines his rays ;
Bereft of leaves henceforth the grove now stays,
And snow already covers all the hills.
Come, friendly Season ! if the grief—that fills
My bosom—nothing hitherto allays,
Now that the skies are cold and wet the days,
Perhaps thou'lt bring some respite to my ills.
In torrents let the rain come down and floods,
As much as erst in Noah's time did come :
For then at least the Dun will stay at home ;
Nor can he come so often to his task,
Unless he be a wildman of the woods,
As now he does me for Three Groats to ask.

CLXXXVIII. 188.

Bleak Winter's reign henceforth is past and o'er ;
North winds and nipping frosts no longer sway ;
And now the Swallow comes from Egypt's shore,
To breathe with us a more refreshing day ;
The verdant leaf now clothes the grove once more ;
With flowers and grass again the meads are gay ;
Again sad Progne's voice is heard to pour,
And Philomel renews her wonted lay.
Now at this time, the fairest of the year,
The Shepherdess and Shepherd joyful love
In mirthful dance the nimble foot to move :
Alone I mope, to sadness a prey ;
The Three Groats' dunning claimant, wheresoe'er,
For me each pleasure mars or turns away !

CLXXXIX. 189.

When in the World's primeval age, 'mong Men,
Pure Nature's precepts were their actions' guide,
With equal rights to every citizen,
They'd all in common—'tween them to divide.
But, thirst of *having*, later—wealthier when,
Of *mine* and *thine* found the distinction wide :
And by reciprocal exchanges then
Each other's wants they mutually supplied.
But, as an equalness in every case
Could not be always had by barter's way,
Money was substituted in its place :
And later this brought with it every where
A train of woes, whereof unto this day
I for Three Groats have borne an ample share.

CXC. 190.

Superfluous prolixity of clack,
Chrysophilus ! I hate : conversely so
I love substantial brevity in talk,—
The style that Sparta used awhile ago.
Thus the Byzantine magistrates did balk
The Macedonian, when he ask'd to go
Thro their dominions, and opposed his walk
With one—but a sonorous downright “NO!”⁽³⁰⁾
This sturdy “No”—this plain unvarnish'd “Yes”—
Are tokens of a heart sincere at core,
Which thus its real sentiments express :
So, when thou ask'st me thy Three Groats to pay,
If with a “NO” I answer—nothing more,
Let this in me a heart sincere display.

CXCI. 191.

When from her den the Tigress, mad with wrath,
Misses her cubs, the Hunter just has ta'en,—
Him after, that already flies amain,
She foaming springs, and closes with him rath :
But he throws down a mirror⁽³¹⁾ in her path ;—
She foolish stays to look, then starts again ;
Another drops,—she views herself therein,
And gives the robber time to 'scape his death.
Thus, if my Creditor come 'cross my way,
One of my *Sonnets* straight I make him hear :
He lists, then wants me the Three Groats to pay :
With other *Sonnets* still I persevere ;
And entertain him thus and keep at bay,
Until by little and little I get me clear.

CXCII. 192.

What will not, to be talk'd about one day,
The ambitious man attempt ! for future fame,
Some sweat 'neath weight of arms in war's fierce game,
And to the hostile blows the breast display :
Some give their weary eyes no rest, while they
O'er learned leaves grow pale : with views the same,
He, who Diana's temple fired, his name
Intended to immortalize that way.
How fortunate, Oh Creditor ! art thou :
That, without any merit—skill—art—lore—
Aught of thy own, thy name is famous now ;
And haply shall it its renown down carry
To after times : yet dost thou nothing more
Than ever me for thy Three Groats to worry.

CXCIIL. 194.

Should'st thou do greater feats than either or
Rolando, Rhodomonte, or Ferrau, ⁽³²⁾
Or he that made Darius to him bow,
Or Charles—the Mounseers' mighty Emperor ;
Had no one in the World more sense than thou,
More virtue—valour—wisdom—wit or lore ;
And didst thou even know a little more
Than he who found the rule-of-three ere now ;—
Thy name, O Creditor ! to latest ages
Would not become so celebrated nearly,
As now, henceforth recorded in these pages,
The importunity (alike to shame us)
Thou'st always plagued me with both late and early,
For ever and for ever will be famous.

CXCIV. 195.

Perhaps that some will blame me in this thing ;
Others perhaps will think it too long spun,
Because I harp upon no other string
Than the Three Groats and my tormenting Dun ;
And, as a fertile vein for more than fun
Apollo gave—and taught me how to sing,
Would have me up a higher gamut run
The feats of some great Chief or mighty King.
But, as the hardships he has undergon',
And battles wherein he has ta'en a part,
The Soldier always goes descanting on ;
So of my cruel Dun devoid of ruth—
And of my debt I talk, to ease my smart :
As still the tongue falls on the aching tooth.

CXCIV. 196.

When autumn rain falls over night, and from
The golden East the Sun dispreads his ray,
On the wet soil the dangerous mushroom
A brief appearance makes and rots away:
Such were, Chrysophilus ! thy future doom,
With nothing that immortalize thee may,
Save the Three Groats, with which, none more than whom—
I'll make thee famous thro the World for aye.
And the ancient Miser shall hereafter thee
For an example rare and type forth hold
T' his prodigal Son, and to him thus shall he,—
“ My Son ! Would'st thou also grow rich (he'll say)
“ Him imitate, that was in days of old
“ The Debtor's scourge—still dunning him to pay.”

CXCVI. 193.

These tuneful plaints, I to the winds disperse,
One morning to Chrysophilus I read :
Which when he'd heard me to the end rehearse,
He with unmoved rigidity thus said,—
“ Not song I want from thee, but to be paid :
“ For—poetry ne'er yet could fill the purse :
“ Instead of wasting time, too long delay'd,
“ Me once for all prepare to reimburse.”
I answer'd him—‘ Sufficient care I've born' ;
‘ And to this hour the Triple Groats' old score
‘ Has in my side still been a painful thorn.
‘ An wilt be paid, it is thy business now :
‘ I'm tired—and will think of it no more :
‘ I've hitherto—now think upon it thou.’

CXCVII. 197.

Unwise is he, that, in the cheerful days
Of early youth's green spring, with barren fame
Is charm'd ; and, idly basking in its rays,
That lives enslaved by Glory's empty name :
If uselessly with Poesy's bright flame
Apollo warm'd my breast ; and, for my lays,
Now on Parnassus' top—and now I frame
On lofty Helicon to pluck the bays ;—
Since that my Creditor the Muse disdains,
And far from Cyrrha turns his steps till now,
Nor with th' unfading leaf will deck his brow,
Nor deems the tuneful verse, that here I weave,
(Indifferent he to all poetic strains)
Worth his Three Groats—which he'd much rather have.

CXCVIII. 198.

A man of squeaking voice, of middle age,
Tall, shrivell'd, thin, and stooping that doth go ;
So slow and dull, it puts one in a rage ;
Irresolute—no man was ever so ;
Tenacious of whate'er he may allege ;
Inquisitive—for news going to and fro ;
If ask'd a question—there he stays on edge
For half an hour, without saying *Yes* or *No* ;
But above all, so troublesome he is,
So clam'rous and such an inveterate bore,
That his true character consists in this.
Should any one now ask whom this denotes,
And of the individual would know more,—
This is the Creditor of the Three Groats.

CXCIX. 199.

Whoe'er the voice of my lament has heard,
With which these melancholy leaves I fill,
And the complaints I've here 'gainst him preferr'd
Who lent me those Three Groats I owe him still,—
Perhaps will say that I've done wrong, and err'd,
To treat a worthless subject thus, and will
Declare Apollo has in vain conferr'd
This heavenly gift on me—to use so ill.
But who can know the man that to my song
The motive gives, and what the sorrow is
That wrings my heart and has made pine so long?
Whoe'er can know that oft within my thoughts
I do not weep my real miseries
Beneath the pretext of the Triple Groats?

CC. 200.

Last night, within my chamber while immured ;
And, by the radiance that a rushlight shed,
Singing the woes I've from my Dun endured ;
Apollo stood before, and thus he said.—

“Thou'st sported now enough—thy debt is paid :

“If Honour's call be in thy bosom heard,

“Wake themes that may immortalize thee—dead.”

Then on me stern he frown'd, and disappear'd.

A heavy trance now o'er my senses came,—

The lyre fell from my hand, went out the flame,

And—sticking in my throat—expired the lay.

At last again then coming to my thoughts,—

‘Here now (said I) henceforth, “Good Night!” I say,

‘For ever to my Dun and his THREE GROATS.’

THE TRANSLATOR'S
EPILOGUE.

Hail, fellow Rhymsters all ! be of good cheer :
 Pluck up new courage Fortune to oppose ;
 And hold in utter scorn the World of prose :
 Henceforth to you unfolds a bright career !
 Each Poet now may be his own cashier :
 We've here a panacea 'gainst all woes,
 With means to bid defiance to our foes ;
 Nor dinners' want nor durance need we fear.
 And tremble ye—vile Duns ! obnoxious race !
 For now a brother Bard, in moving strains,
 Has taught us how to liquidate a debt
 And treat a Creditor in future case ;
 Like this one, gibbeted and hung in chains,
 Tuck'd *in terrorem* up to all the set !

NOTES.

NOTE 1. Sonnet xiii.

Father G. Daniel, a french historian of the seventeenth century, author of the work entitled "A Voyage to the World of Descartes," wherein he examines that philosopher's fanciful hypotheses.

NOTE 2. Sonnets xxviii. xci.

This is the *Cicada* or Balm-Cricket; one of the *Gryllus* family; and, however it be classed, certainly of the *stridulous* species. It is common to the South of Europe.

In the Natural History of this Insect are given some amusing accounts of its obstreperous loquacity, as if it seemed to wish to make up in noise for its deficiency in other means of attracting notice or powers of mischief, for in every other respect it is a perfectly harmless creature.

Anacreon has honoured the Cricket by making it the subject of one of his Odes, the 43rd; and which has been very prettily imitated, or rather paraphrased, in a Sonnet, by the italian poet C. M. Maggi. There is also a very beautiful english Sonnet addressed to it—in conjunction with its cousin of the hearth, by Mr. Leigh Hunt.

In Southey's History of Brazil (vol. i. cap. 5*) there is a curious anecdote about one of these creatures being the means of saving a squadron of vessels from shipwreck, by beginning to chirp at night time when they were approaching the land without any body being aware of the danger.

* P. 105. 4to. edition. 1810.

NOTE 3. Sonnet xxxix.

This simple Sonnet, extemporaneously written, suggested the Work.

NOTE 4. Sonnets xlii. cxiii. ccix.

These were written during the "Seven Years' War" 1756—63.

NOTE 5. Sonnet liii.

There is a book on this subject by the learned Salmasius (Claude de Saumaise) "*De annis climactericis etc.* Lugd. Bat. 1648." wherein all particulars about the "Grand Climacteric" are fully discussed. The Antients considered the 63rd as the climacteric year. See also Beloe's Miscellanies (vol. ii. p. 45. 16mo. edit :) for some interesting details thereon.

NOTE 6. Sonnet lxi.

It is not certain what Queen Bertha is here alluded to ; but probably the wife of Pepin the Short, and mother to Charlemagne, as in those days Ladies of even the very highest rank were accustomed to work for their Lords. As with the Italians, *Au temps que la Reine Berthe filait* is an adage still in use among the French, in reference to the olden time. And we still have "In the days of king Lud." To our own Bertha, Ethelbert's queen, this Country owes the abolition of Paganism.

NOTE 7. Sonnet lxxv.

This alludes to the unsuccessful invasion of the Neapolitan territory by the Austrians and Hungarians under Prince Lobkowitz, in 1744 ; when they penetrated as far as Veletri but were eventually repulsed. On their advance, being encamped near the city, the Romans used to go out and look

at them with astonishment and admiration, conceiving them very formidable from their "barbarous" clothing and harsh-sounding language. See *Bonamici's* History of that War. *De Rebus etc.* lib. i. c. 2.

NOTE 8. Sonnet lxxx.

We have not been able to find any authority for the use and properties here attributed to "Aristotle's stick." But, from a passage in Horace (Serm: l. iii. 134) it would seem that the Stoic Philosophers of his time, who wore a long beard as indicative of their Sect, and by their negligent dress otherwise resembled the Cynics, were obnoxious to the popular majesty, and used to carry a stick when they went abroad, to repel the approaches of boys and ragamuffins whom the singularity of their appearance drew about them. This practice might also have prevailed among the elder Sages, and the "cane" have been worn by them like the later "wig"—as giving assurance of "wisdom." Moreover, Aristotle, as the founder of the Peripatetic Sect, might *ex officio* have been accustomed to use a walking stick: and, as he was remarkable for a very dogmatic and proselyting turn, it is not improbable that he occasionally employed the *argumentum bacculinum* to enforce his doctrines and work the "wonderful effects" here spoken of.

NOTE 9. Sonnets lxxxii. lxxxiii.

A slight deviation from the Original has here been made, in using general terms, to avoid the necessity of explaining it by a long account of the Italian lotteries. These may be seen described in detail in Blunt's *Vestiges*. p. 272. and Rose's *Letters*. vol. i. p. 72.

NOTE 10. Sonnets lxxxiv. cxxii.

Arabian writers on the *Cabala* or occult science; also sometimes familiarly called with us the "Black Art," from an

erroneous connection of it with that of modern "Abstraction*," formerly so called from its practitioners—the Robin Hood gentry—being usually masked or disguised with black.

NOTE 11. Sonnet xciv. xcv.

The connection here of these two Sonnets, which cannot be disjoined, proves the superior correctness and authority of our Original (that of Naples 1814) to the Paris Editions, where they are separated, S. 94 being there 66 and S. 95—79, thus making the latter allude to a circumstance that does not appear. This is further corroborated by the Sixteen additional Sonnets, here given in Appendix; several of them being evidently the first thought of others afterwards worked out in a better form among the retained ones, and therefor laid aside by the Author, as they would then have been but bad repetitions of the latter. But, in common with so many others, he has here suffered from the injudiciousness of his own "_____kind friends," or others of those "savers of last drops," who seem to think that quantity alone is a sufficient recommendation and that any increase of amount is enough to make up for whatever defect.

NOTE 12. Sonnet xcv.

"The faithful band of friends."

This society was composed of any number of persons, who united for the purpose of mutual assistance in the event of falling into poverty. They were accustomed to have suppers and entertainments at their common expense, each contributing his proportion; and were called Eranists (*græcè* *Ερανισταί*, collectors, *quasi* mendicants) from soliciting relief for any of their members who might be in want. See *Atheneus*, l. 8, c. 16. and *Gronovius. Thes. Græc. Ant. vol. 6. p. 373*. Horace seems to allude to something of the sort at Rome. *Epl*:

* "Convey" the wise it call: *steal*? poh! a ficio for the phrase.

Pistol. M. W. of W. A. 1, S.

l. 13. 15. Akin to this was our ancient "Bid-ale" or "Help-ale."

NOTE 13. Sonnet xciv.

The generally received opinion about the famous Law of the Twelve Tables is (as our honest Debtor here says) that it was borrowed from Greece. But some modern historians (*i. a.* Vico) have called this in question, considering it as the product natural and characteristic of the civil state of the Roman community at the time of its enactment. At all events it seems to have overlooked the case of "Small Debtors."

With reference to the first part of the above, the famous Jurist Accursius has a most excellent story on the subject, illustrating the usefulness of silence as a substitute for and token of wisdom.

"The Romans having requested the Athenians to communicate those laws to them which Solon had dictated, the Grand Council of Athens assembled to consider of the demand. It was resolved—that one of the Grecian Sages should be sent to Rome, to see whether the Romans were entitled by their wisdom to have these Laws; with orders, if they were not, to bring the Laws back without communicating them.

"This resolution was not formed so secretly as to prevent the Roman Senate from being informed of it. On hearing it they were much embarrassed; for it was a time when Rome did not possess Philosophers sufficiently profound and learned to contend with a Grecian Sage. The question then was—to find some expedient to disentangle themselves from this dilemma. The Senate determined—that there was nothing better than to oppose a Fool to the Grecian Philosopher; with this view, that if by chance the Fool prevailed, it would be a great honour to the Romans that one of their Fools had confounded one of the Grecian Sages; and, if the latter triumphed, it would be no great glory to the Athenians for having overcome a Fool. They also resolved that some of their most learned men should disguise themselves as labourers, and appear

to be working in the roads on the day that the Grecian Ambassador should come to Rome; and, when they saw him, some should address him in latin, some in greek, and others in hebrew.

“The Athenian Ambassador, on his entering into Rome, was addressed by these men in the different languages. He was met by the Senate, and conducted to the Capitol; not without making many reflections on how great the learning of the Romans must be, when the common labourers spoke the various languages with such elegance. When he arrived at the Capitol, he was introduced into an apartment superbly furnished; where they had placed a Fool in a chair, dressed as a Senator, and with the strictest injunctions not to speak a word.

“The Ambassador, prepossessed with the idea of the Senator being extremely learned, thought he did not wish to speak. Under this impression, the Athenian, without saying a word, held up one of his fingers: The Fool, thinking it was a threat to put out one of his eyes, and remembering he was ordered not to speak, held up three of his; to signify that—if the Grecian put out one of his eyes, he in turn would put out both his and with the third finger choak him.

“The Philosopher, who, in elevating his finger, only meant to convey his idea of there being but one Supreme who governed all,—imagined that the Fool’s holding up his three fingers was to indicate, that to God the past—the present—and the future—were equally known; and judged from that that he was a very learned man.

“After this, he opened his hand, and showed it to the Fool, wishing to express that nothing was concealed from the Almighty: But the Fool, taking this sign portended him a slap on the face, presented his fist to the Philosopher, to give him to understand that for a slap he would give him a punch.

“On the contrary, the Greek, already prepossessed in favour of the Fool, imagined that by this gesture he meant to say, that God held the Universe in his hand; and, judging from that of the profound wisdom of the Romans, he gave them the Laws of Solon.”

This story is altogether too good to be spoiled by quoting for it an authority that might be disputed: its paternity must therefor be left with the worthy Legist from whom it is borrowed.

NOTE 14. Sonnet xevii.

This circumstance, omitted by some historians, is mentioned by Livy. l. 5. c. 48. and Florus. l. 1. c. 13.

NOTE 15. Sonnet ci.

This ingenious idea has been made familiar to us by the lively Munchausen. But who claims the merit of its original? Mr. Southey, in his *Omniana*, has quoted it from a Portuguese periodical antecedent to the Baron: and it is to be found in an English writer older still. By the way, no allusion is made to the fact by our late Northern Explorers: Is there more in Nature's Philosophy than they dreamed of?

NOTE 16. Sonnet ciii.

We must suppose our poor Poet to have here been so distracted with his debt as to forget the existence of the *Flying-Fish*. Unless indeed he was as incredulous about it as the old West-Country Woman of whom Jack tells; who, on his relation of the wonders of the Sea and of the West-Indies, admitted the possible existence of "mountains of sugar and rivers of rum:" But, added she rhythmically—

"For fishes that flee—

"That never can be."

It was no doubt this same sceptical Granny, who, when Jack was telling her of the hardships of a sea life, shrewdly observed that it could not be a very laborious one, since "Sailors had only to sit on their seats and let the wind blow them along."

NOTE 17. Sonnet civ. cxxxii. cxl. excii.

Orlando Furioso. canto 34.

NOTE 18. Sonnet cxiv.

This alludes to the custom, common in Roman Catholic Countries (and which is of Pagan origin) of presenting votive offerings at the shrine of the Virgin Mary, or any Patron Saint, for benefits assumed to have been received thro their intercession, such as recovery in sickness or other escape from danger, and mostly after a promise or vow to that effect. These are generally representations, whether in painting or sculpture, of the circumstances in question: they are for the most part sufficiently curious; and, however good their motive, sometimes not very edifying.

NOTE 19. Sonnet cxv.

One of the Laws of The Twelve Tables—"De Debitores in partes secando."

NOTE 20. Sonnet cxxvi.

This was written on hearing some music. Plato, in the tenth book of his Republic, gives a most whimsical hypothesis on "Celestial Music,"—imagining the Heavens to be subdivided into eight revolving concentrical circles; on each whereof presides a Syren, diffusing her own modulated tones around, and all uniting in a common harmony. Plutarch speaks of this theory in his Treatise on Music. See also the *Somnium Scipionis* (sect. 5) wherein Cicero follows Pythagoras, for a beautiful fancy on the "Music of the spheres."

There are even Philosophers of our own day, who entertain the notion of a sonorous fluid pervading all space and creating such ethereal harmony. But this has always been a favourite notion: and indeed seems founded on those aspirations after higher and better things, that are an evidence at once of the capacity of the soul for their enjoyment and of its being destined to possess them.

NOTE 21. Sonnet cxxviii.

Some of the dialects of Latin origin, as the French, Italian, and others, seem to have been at one time distinguished by their Affirmative Particle; an instance of which still exists in the name of that part of France called *Languedoc*. So the Provençal Minstrels, and the Romance-writers of more Northern France, have respectively been called "Poets of *Oc*," and "Proser—*or* Prosewriters—of *Oui*." In Menage's *Origines de la Langue Française*, however, are some different and conflicting etymologies about the name of Languedoc; some deriving it from *Langue Gothe*—Gothic, and others from *Langue d'Occident*—Western. Let us not presume to decide when *Linguists* disagree. But (as suggested by a wag at our elbow) whatever be the Tongue of that same, there is no doubt but that the true Land of *Oc* (now more aspirated—after, "*Hoc erat in votis*") is—not France at all—but Germany.

The Germanic Nations again agree in the common use of *Io* or *Ya* for their Affirmative. And Italy is called by Dante (*Inferno*. cap: 33. v. 80.)

"*Il bel paese là dove il Sì suona.*"

See this not uninteresting subject treated at length likewise in Dante *De la Volgare Eloquenzia*. l. 1. c. 8—which is almost the text of our Sonnet, and c. 10. Also in Fontanini *Della Eloquentia Italiana*. c. 30. Sismondi's Literary History. vol. i. p. 38. 270. and Dr. Moore's Essay on the Origin of Romance of the South of Europe.

The "Vulgar Tongue" (*Lingua volgare*) is the oral or common idiom of Italy, corrupted from the Latin; so called to distinguish it from its original, formerly that of letters and the learned.

NOTE 22. Sonnet cxxix.

In these days of novelty and enterprize, when several distinct arms of the Ocean have already been united, and no less is contemplated than a junction of the Atlantic and Pacific seas, it is not uninteresting to look back at similar projects of

former ages. The separation of the Corinthian isthmus (as that of Suez) has been frequently attempted, by some of the greatest names in antiquity, and equally in vain. Notwithstanding the failure of Alexander—J. Caesar—and others, it was lastly undertaken by Nero, with no better success. See Pausanias. l. 2. c. 1. also Univ. Hist. vol. 5. p. 566. London. Fol: 1740. Charlemagne, who for his age really deserved the title of “great,” had projected a junction of the German Ocean and the Black Sea by uniting the Danube with the Rhine; and actually began operations for the thing, but desisted on finding it impracticable. Science, however, has since given so much more means of overcoming its difficulties, and the hands as well as the human mind are so much more free than in his time, that the scheme is now really within the line of probability.

With respect to the first-mentioned project—if ever that takes place,—it will be, not by what is generally imagined the most obvious way—the River Chagres at the Isthmus of Darien, but farther North—by the Lake of Nicaragua; the country there, tho the space to be crossed is much wider, affording much greater facilities than at the former point. This indeed would be an immense feat; and seems one well worthy of British enterprize and capital, and not to let us be anticipated in it by our North-American Brethren.

NOTE 23. Sonnet cxxx.

So B. Jonson (in his ‘Discoveries’) says—“For, what never was will not easily be found—not by the most curious.” There certainly is something satisfactory in such propositions as these: for they neither admit of dispute nor leave any thing to be explained or desired.

NOTE 24. Sonnet cxxxii.

Orlando Furioso. canto 15 *passim*.

NOTE 25. Sonnet cxlviii.

“Campidoglio.” The modern name for the Capitol of Rome. Some of the learned have considered this word to be formed from *Campo d’oglio*, i. e. the Field of oil or Oil-market; and are correspondingly indignant at the degradation. But there seems no reason to go so far for an etymology; because, in the first place, there is no evidence of its ever having been used specially for that purpose; and, nextly, it is a very obvious corruption of the proper name.

NOTE 26. Sonnet cl.

This of course refers to the dress worn by Gentlemen or *comme il faut* persons at the time when it was written. The “mantle” and the “toupee” have long since given way even in Italy to the universal coat and crop.

NOTE 27. Sonnet clv.

Small coin, current in Italy in the early part of the last century.

NOTE 28. Sonnet clxiv.

The Roman *Sestertius* (the lesser Sesterce) worth nearly three half-pence of our money, is here to be distinguished from the *Sestertium* (the greater) whose value corresponds to about £8. sterling. So that our worthy Poet would have required about nine *Sestertii* to liquidate his debt.

NOTE 29. Sonnet clxxxvi.

The loves of Hercules were so numerous, far exceeding even his labours, that it is not easy to determine who was the Goddess here meant, this title being applied to female Deities in general of whatever order. Autonaë, who had made him the father of Palæmon—one of the individuals here mentioned, being a Nereid, is not unlikely to be the lady in question.

NOTE 30. Sonnet cxc.

Byzantium (according to some writers) was founded by the Spartans, and thus might naturally be equally sparing of words. On another occasion Philip, having invaded Laconia, proposed some terms to the Lacedemonians, to which the only answer he could obtain was "NO."

NOTE 31. Sonnet xcxi.

"But he throws down a *mirror* in her path."

An authority for this manner of throwing a tiger—or tigress (certainly rather the lady) at fault may be found in Æsop.

Another mode of effecting it has been mentioned, namely—putting a looking-glass in such a situation as that the animal shall break it; and, seeing itself reflected in all the fragments, take fright at the multiplication of itself it has thus conjured up and make off. These stratagems are not explained *at length* in any modern book of field-sports: Tho they are alluded to by Somerville in his Chase. III. 291—307.

NOTE 32. Sonnet xciii.

Personages in the Orlando Furioso. What follows is not too much to say of his fame: however troublesome a fellow, Chrysophilus will live as long as his language.

APPENDIX.

BURTHEN OF THE SONNETS

OMITTED BY THE AUTHOR AND REPUBLISHED IN THE PARIS EDITIONS.

No.

201. The Poet hath a vision of Parnassus.
 202. He sees Hades, but no torment there equal to his Dun.
 203. Tells his Dun he is the most ill-omened of Birds.
 204. Asks him how he came not to be one of the plagues of Egypt.
 205. Laments the speed of his Dun in ever following him.
 206. Promises Charon the Three Groats on ferrying his Dun over the Styx.
 207. On squaring accounts with his Dun—he finds himself Creditor.
 208. Tells his Dun he is Creditor to an Insolvent.
 209. Shows how his Creditor's voice would be an irresistible weapon.
 210. Complains that some Pet Birds have learned to dun him.
 211. He proposes to his Dun to pay him with SONNETS.
 212. Compares him to Hercules, whom he would have less feared.
 213. Transmogrifies himself to a Bird, but is outwitted by his Dun.
 214. Likens him to a Husbandman uselessly tilling a barren soil.
 215. Requests Neptune, Vulcan, and Pluto, to knock down his Dun.
 216. Mars and Love bid him have done with the THREE GROATS.
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201.

What time, prolonging our accustom'd day,
The Sun above the burnt-up pole fierce glows,
As late, my limbs reclining for repose,
I yielded me to Morpheus' gentle sway,—
The laurell'd Hill appear'd in bright display,
Where Aganippe's lucid current flows ;
And hitherwards advancing, as it rose,
A train of learned Sages throng'd the way.
With curious looks awhile, or ere they spoke,
The gifted band their eyes towards me turned,
And, seeing me there, in open laughter broke.
At length—"This is (said they) the moonstruck Wight,
"Who, for Three Groats most dreadfully concerned,
"Distils and racks his brain both day and night."

202.

Within Avernus' depths of blackest night
A fiend of hideous guise me passive bore.
When, fearless there arriving to explore,
A tragic scene was offer'd to my sight.—
Tisiphone I saw, without affright,
Megara—Alecto, with unnumber'd more ;
Who scourge the manes on the infernal shore,
With all dread Pluto's wrath and vengeful might.
There monsters—hydras—gorgons met my eye ;
With all that barbarous cruelty invents,
And grief—despair—and horror's mingled sway.
But to them turning,—"'Pon my soul! (said I)
"There here is nothing that in any way
"Torments one as the Three Groats' Dun torments."

203.

The bird of night with his lugubrious cry—
 I know's a most ill-omen'd sound to hear,
 And ever wont to cause misboding fear
 To our old simple-soul'd antiquity :
 What time a flight of Ravens sail the sky,
 Can ne'er betoken good where they appear ;
 And, when the howl of Wolves assails the ear,
 Dread pain and sorrow follow by-and-by.
 But what affrights me more than all (and now
 Believe me—Dun of the Three Groats!) I say—
 Is a disgusting Crow, and such art thou.
 Thou'rt ever at my heels ; still close thou clingest ;
 And, with a clamour worse than Stork or Jay,
 To me eternal evil-omen bringest.

204.

Howe'er ill off or wretched we may be,
 There's this consideration to supply
 A solace,—that (as no one will deny)
 Things might be worse, in kind as in degree.
 For instance—what a lucky thing for me
 It is, 'midst all my miseries, that I
 Was born beneath a European sky,
 And not beyond the Red or Yellow Sea :
 For—were, 'stead this, *Quinsai* my native place,
 And near enough my Creditor could get
 A circle round about me there to trace,
 Once in that ring [their law so POLO quotes]
 I fain should be to liquidate my debt
 And nilly-willy pay him his Three Groats.

* * * Substituted for the Original. See "Sketch, etc.:" p. xxv

205.

Ye, my complaints who hear! ah! could ye know
The secret sorrow that my bosom fills,
Perhaps some kind compassion for my ills
Would move your own with sympathetic wo :
A clamorous Dun's for ever at my heels ;
Just as a dog his master follows, so
He winds and traces me where'er I go ;
No hound, I'm certain, more acutely smells :
Whatever place I go to—there he is ;
And, while avoiding him, the more I meet ;
And still he follows in my track like this.
No stag nor hare was ever such a racer :
With him should Atalanta run a heat,
She'd swear that Satan helps him to outpace her.

206.

Among our heathen ancestors, of yore,
A pious custom was in use ('tis said)—
To put a piece of money, less or more,
Within the bier—or fingers of the dead ;
That, when arriving at the Stygian shore,
The coin should help them, to the boatman paid,
With greater ease on that donation's score
To cross the infernal river nor be stay'd.
If thou, my Dun! within not many days
Should'st make thy exit, by my faith! I swear—
And by my debt! that, without more delays,
Trust me, I shall be ready for thee (when,
Namely—what time I go and find thee there)
To pay the due Three Groats to Charon then.

207.

At length, Chrysophilus ! I'll thee repay :
The house is near at hand, let's go in there :
But our accounts first promise me to square,
And then will I the Three Groats' debt defray.
My loss of time I'll reckon—many a day,
Pen—ink—and paper, Sonnets on the affair,
Oil—candles—spectacles, and eke a pair
Of sleeves worn-out by leaning on that way ;
Gunpowder for the chase—pounds not a few,
Shoe-leather used in 'scaping from thy ken ;
Besides a doorbell's cost in full amount—
One day thou brak'st it, and I bought a new.
With equity and justice acting then,
Thou should'st the balance place to my account.

208.

At early dawn to walk I sometimes go,
Still thinking thee, my Creditor ! about ;
And in my mind the thought is rooted so,
That nothing possibly can drive it out.
Now what the devil thou'st done me, I don't know,
I only know where'er I turn my foot,
The old Three Groats still haunt me high and low,
Which I'd retribute thee—but have them not.
But thou, amidst an hundred daily cares,
Dost rack thy brain to squeeze the money from :
And, should the Debtor break, the account who squares ?
So thy misfortune's much the worst of any,
In being a Creditor, and then to whom ?—
To one who's never worth a single penny !

209.⁽⁴⁾

Should Prussia's Sovereign muster in array
 Innumerable legions of such men as I,
 Or England's Monarch keep the like in pay,
 The Emperor would defeat them and defy :
 For, in the field amidst the bloody fray,
 Should he set up aloud this dreadful cry—
Oh Debtor ! pay me my Three Groats. Straightway
 The hostile armies would turn tail and fly.
 That sound puts me in such a horrid fright,
 The Titans e'en—when from the empyreal height
 Jove thunder'd them—were not in so much fear :
 The ill-omen'd tone has such terrific might,
 It rings perpetually within my ear ;
 Yea—dead as 'live I'd hear it—day or night.

210.

Its every keenest shaft, to swell my wo,
 Against me Fate has aim'd ! Alas ! unblest :
 What doom awaits me, since—however so—
 No pity penetrates my Dun's cold breast ?
 All ! listen to my sorrows : well I know
 Are fled for aye my happiness and rest ;
 Where seek them now—where find them here below—
 Since e'en at home he tracks me to molest ?
 A Parrot and a Magpie late I bought,
 Awhile from these sad miseries to free me ;
 But torments worse than any have they brought :
 The incident was fatal ; for, one day,
 What time my Creditor had come to see me,
 They learn'd to dun me the Three Groats to pay !

211.

Oh dear Tormentor ! could'st thou not one day
Mind thine own business—unconcern'd 'bout me ?
Thou surely must the uselessness now see
Of teasing me—with nought wherewith to pay.
Thou'rt o'er importunate : nor can I say
What title may be best befitting thee.
Thou'dst drive me crazy : but, howe'er it be,
I'll not grow crazy for Three Groats, no way.
Then chirrup day and night, for aught I care :
Thou'lt get no money out of him wh' has none ;
An wilt have SONNETS from me—here they are :
So to thy deathless glory shall be said,
Ne'er boasted yet 'mong Duns by any one,—
“Thro special favour thus his debt was paid.”

212.

Unmatch'd Alcides ! who didst erst astound
The world with wondrous feats in many a feud ;
Who didst explore Avernus' deepest bound,
And crush the Hydra—spite his heads renewed !
Beneath thy formidable club renown'd,
The Erymanthean monster fell subdued :
Nor any has in modern times been found
With prowess comp'able to thine endued.
Thy deathful arm it was such terror brought
To people's hearts : yet ne'er thy voice alone
Could have perform'd what that dread dexter wrought.
Excuse me : but there's still a stouter one,
Who instantly can kill me dead as stone—
With merely asking for his Thrice a Groat.

213.

Great Jove ! one favour from thee I beseech :
Pray give me wings, that I may freely go
Athwart ethereal space, beyond the reach
Of my Three Groats' Dun, and avoid him so.
Thou grant'st the boon : and from my shoulders each
I joyful see the feather'd pinions grow :
I fear no more ; for now, retaining speech,
My face and form a Bird's appearance show.
Ah fleeting joys—howe'er with promise big !
When most I thought to seize them in this shape,
My Dun grows metamorphos'd to a twig :
And, while I fancied to repose me there,
“ *In vain* (he cried) *thou from me would'st escape :*
“ *In spite of thee—I'll follow everywhere.*”

214.

When some exhausted ground dries up at last,
Nor rain descends to irrigate the soil,
In vain the Husbandman with efforts vast
Works night and day,—no crops reward his toil :
And, should consuming heat still scorch and broil,
It never can produce as in times past ;
Till, grown a barren waste, his cares to foil,
It yields but weeds and tares of worthless cast.
So, Dun ! it happens thee : and thou, still worse,
Who merciless deniest me rain and dew,
Can nothing more expect to reimburse.
But thou'rt a precious zany—like to few,
Who fanciest thus—where nothing ever grew—
To elicit the Three Groats therefrom by force !

215.

Who e'er such wretchedness was doom'd to know
As mine, who always have about my way
That plague—who gives me respite night nor day—
Nor e'er will let me have repose below!
Oh Neptune! would'st some pity for me show,
Whene'er he duns me—or desires to pay—
Or the Three Groats requires me to defray,
Do give him with thy trident a good blow.
Or, Vulcan! with thy hammer knock him down.
And, Pluto! take below with thee to Hell:
For only then I peace and rest shall have.
So troublesome a rogue was never known:
For—even dead and buried—know I well
You'll hear him cry still louder from his grave.

216.

At noontide's sultry hour, in pensive plight,
Where roaming I a leafy arbour found,
To put awhile my gloomy thoughts to flight,
I stretch'd my limbs along the shady ground:
My lyre down-laid, in sleep oblivious bound—
Mine eyes were closed,—when present to my sight
Lo Mars and Love appear'd and angry frown'd,
My conscious breast all trembling with affright.
Mars took the lyre; and, as towards him turned,
To Love consign'd, and to me thus he said—
“Fool! what of thee will Cyrrha say for this?
“Henceforth these follies leave: such trifles spurned,
“Expel them from thy mind: and, that debt paid,
“The Creditor of the Three Groats dismiss.”

T A B L E

O F T H E

S O N N E T S.

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66. Algiers, and Tunis, Tripoli, Salé.	46
86. All bodies, it is true, do not possess.	54
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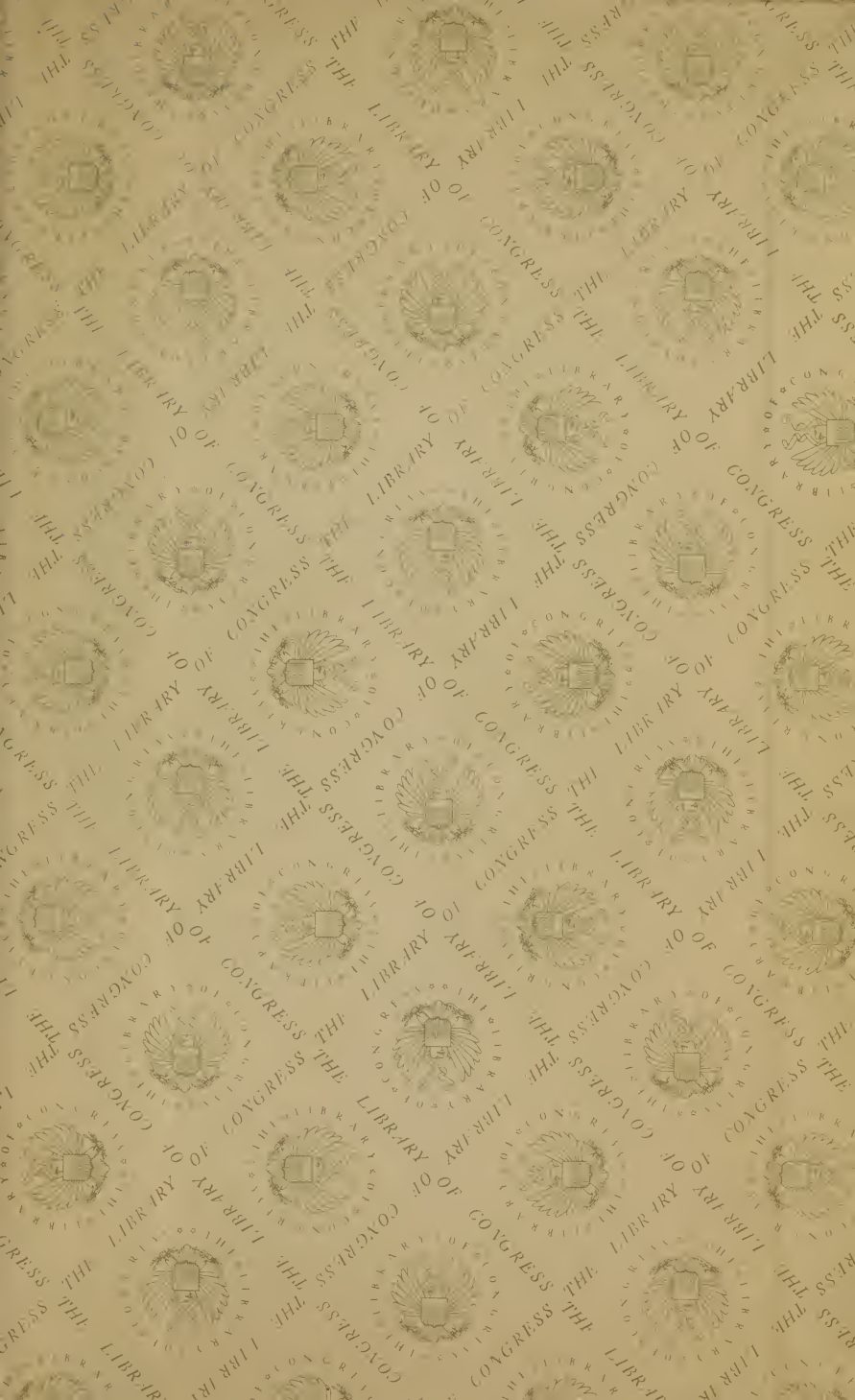
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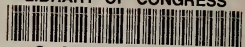
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